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NOTICE.—The first article on Wagner by Peter Latham, and the coloured portrait of the composer, are held over till June, so as to begin the new volume.

MARCH RECORDS

By THE EDITOR

THE London Editor declines to allow me more than two and a half pages this month, so that I shall have little space for anything but the March records and one or two topics of importance.

The issue of Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* by Columbia is at once the most ambitious and the most successful example of the new recording up to date... Yet, as I finished that sentence, I paused to hear some of the mid-April H.M.V. records which arrived this evening, and after listening to the record of the *Fire Scene* from *Valkyrie*, conducted by Albert Coates and played by the Symphony Orchestra, I have to qualify it already. That record is the most successful orchestral record ever published. It is at least twice as good as any other, and, I fancy, much more. I have had it played through to me four times running, and Albert Coates, who a week or two ago was conducting in Naples, may die in peace with this record for a halo. As for me, if I knew how to cock a snook in print at

the esteemed correspondents who have been writing to condole with me on the state of my nerves, my glands, my brains, and my ears since my remarks last month about the new recording, I would do it. Oh, all you die-hards who write and tell me that you are die-hards and proud of it, you'll be simply die-hards of hearing if you refuse to acknowledge this record as a triumph. To come back to Berlioz. One of those correspondents says that in this version his thirty violins sound like a hundred and thirty tin whistles. On the other side I get a correspondent writing to beg me to make amends for my condemnation of the Tchaikovsky *Fourth Symphony*. I am perfectly well again now, and I have played the *Fourth* twice through, but I cannot see my way to retract what I said. Now if, as the "die-hard" suggests, I'm "in a critical condition of mind with regard to the new recording," my ear by this time would have been hopelessly corrupted by it, and I should be admiring the *Fourth* of Tchaikovsky. But

the Berlioz is as much better than that as the *Fire Scene* is better than the Berlioz. I don't care for Weingartner's interpretation, but I don't wish that we could have had Rhené-Baton, who conducted it for H.M.V., because I was glad to have an opportunity of studying an interpretation so completely prosaic as Weingartner's. If the *Symphonie Fantastique* can triumphantly survive that interpretation it proves itself a great work of art. And let there be no mistake, it is a great work of art. It achieves perfectly what it sets out to do. It expresses a great personality, while at the same time it expresses the spirit of its time and environment. At the moment personality is so much at a discount in England that any young man who dips a pen in his mother's milk and writes his autobiography can earn a reputation. To an England that is afraid to buy chocolates after eight o'clock, to an England that is rapidly being turned into a waste-paper basket for civil servants, a personality like Berlioz may seem uncomfortably theatrical.

The records from H.M.V. of the *Venusberg* music from *Tannhäuser* and the *Prelude to Act 3* are still open to "die-hard" criticism, and when played immediately after the *Fire Music* they do sound nasal. They are of the same vintage, I fancy, as the *Parsifal* album. So for all I know may be the *Fire Music*, and the complete success of that may be a happy accident that will not be repeated again for some time. But whatever the faults of these new recordings the promise they offer us for the future is so immense that I view old age with equanimity. I have just seen the mid-April bulletin and find that the *Fire Music* was not played in the recording-room. The future becomes dazzling.

Vocalion are much to be congratulated upon securing the services of M. Rhené-Baton as conductor, and in old style recording nothing could be better than Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Easter Overture*. The Grieg *Suite* from *Sigurd Josalfar*, on two records, is one of Parlophone's pleasant turnings from the beaten track which we have learnt to expect from them and for which we are always grateful. The *Britannia Overture* of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, conducted by him and played by the Queen's Hall Light Orchestra, comes from Columbia, and good stirring stuff it is in a familiar convention. From Columbia, too, we get the *Semiramide Overture* with new recording. Mr. Percy Pitt cannot handle this kind of music with that little more and how much it is of Eugene Goossens, but I should imagine that would not stand in the way of its popularity. I very much enjoyed William Murdoch's performance of two of Debussy's charming little water-colours. The new recording has helped to do him justice as a pianist. Having wandered much on the *collines* of Anacapri (not Ancapri, as printed in the bulletin and on the record) I cannot say that Debussy's music gives me the slightest impression of them, and I

doubt if any composer will succeed in turning the pianoforte into a reliable guide-book. The Pachmann record from H.M.V. of two Chopin waltzes—G flat major, Op. 70, No. 1, and D flat major, Op. 64, No. 1, is first rate. Yes, perhaps Debussy is right. *Les Collines D'Anacapri* do sound more amusing than Op. 64, No. 1. All the same, I would choose Op. 64, No. 1, to help me up the *collines* of Anacapri on a hot afternoon. How the sun can blaze on those western slopes!

March was a great sonata month. I was a little disappointed with Miss Isolde Menges and Mr. De Greef in the *Kreutzer Sonata*. Nearly every violinist does get scratchy in this sonata, but I think Miss Menges should have managed to avoid it. The performance lacks magic, and in spite of the new recording the violin often overbalances the piano. There's no doubt that performers who were particularly successful under the old régime will have to adapt their style of playing to the new methods. But the third movement is splendid. Far more successful, however, than the *Kreutzer* is the delicious little Mozart sonata played by Miss Hayward and Miss Bourne. These two records are in the plum-coloured section, and I shall expect to see them in the first three or four when the time comes for another vote for the best popular price records. I hope that the issue of the *Spring Sonata* by Parlophone means that Edith Lorand and Michael Raucheisen are going to give us a series of Beethoven violin and pianoforte sonatas, and not stop short with this and the *Kreutzer*. There are others, and it is high time we had some of them on the gramophone. I don't want to grumble about the Bach 'cello sonata which Vocalion gave us, but when are we going to have a Beethoven 'cello sonata? The Vocalion 'cello recording is about the best of the lot, and Mr. Howard Bliss can hold his own with any contemporary 'cellist. But do let us have something with—well, I find Bach on the 'cello rather like drinking brown sherry all through dinner. I did not think the London String Quartet in Frank Bridge's arrangement of the *Londonderry Air* was a success. Columbia have still to win their laurels for quartet recording with the new methods. This tickles the nose like dry grass. Commend me to Parlophone for producing artists with names. Tossy Spiwakowsky is the latest. This is a really good violin record, and anybody who is wondering which Raff *Cavatina* to buy is recommended to try this one.

Of the vocal records during March I would give the whole lot for Miss Suddaby in two exquisite songs of Purcell and Haydn (H.M.V.). If only the words were more easily distinguishable I should call this record perfect. Nobody can accuse me of being prejudiced in favour of the English style of singing, but the sweet o' the year is in Miss Suddaby's voice. I suppose I ought not to take advantage of my position as Editor to blow her a kiss for this record,

but I really cannot think of any more suitable way of expressing the pleasure it has given me. I notice that the "blurb" in the bulletin says: "When one listens to Purcell's *Nymphs and Shepherds* it hardly seems possible that it is over two centuries old." I should be uncommonly glad to meet the contemporary composer or poet that is producing work for which we could mistake it.

Another vocal record of exceptional quality is that of Rosa Ponselle. She reminds me of Destinn at her best. I should never have expected that I could get a new thrill either from *Suicidio* or *O patria mia*. But Madame Ponselle provides one. As a sop to the "die-hards" I frankly admit that this record, which is old recording, can hold its own with any of the new recordings.

I notice a sinister recrudescence of the *Indian Love Lyrics* this spring. The songs, which are to poetry what *The Sheikh* is to prose, have appeared in various arrangements of restaurant music and have been sung by different people. Mr. Peter Dawson gives us four of them, and I find the notion of Mr. Dawson as less than the dust beneath somebody's chariot wheels trembling on the verge of the ridiculous. Let me quote the H.M.V.'s bulletin "blurb." "Their richly romantic quality so redolent of the East." Yet when you think how indignant English people get with motorists who drive over them in the high road it is impossible to believe that the emotion aroused in their breasts by this rich and romantic and redolent rot is sincere. I've just had them played through again, and they're even worse than I thought. Pale hands, pink-tipped, where are you now? Here, I regret to say. Not even Mr. A. managed to get rid of them for us. Mr. Dawson makes amends by singing Parry's setting of Blake's glorious *Jerusalem*. By the way, I do wish that the recording companies would include the names of the writers of the words as well as the music. Only Columbia is usually careful to pay this trifling courtesy to literature. There was a good Stracciari record from Columbia of two melodious arias from Donizetti's *La Favorita*—the best Stracciari for some time; and a fine Wagner record from Parlophone of Robert Burg in Wotan's apostrophe to Valhalla and Wolfram's song to Tannhäuser after he escapes from the Venusberg. I was glad to see Miss Olga Haley's name again in the Vocalion bulletin. Once more let me insist upon the outstanding quality of her records.

Finally the *Valencia* I liked best was the H.M.V. record. Now, why does *Tea for Two* bore me and *Valencia* exhilarate me? I suppose that the British public is supporting the intolerable sentimental American songs that the recording companies are pouring over us. It must be, if we may judge by the bulletins. What is the use of agitating against American films and plays and songs? The British public likes them. The plain, hard, depressing

truth is that the British public is captivated by American life and manners, and even most of the English novelists and dramatists of the post-war generation are good little Americans. Never mind, the recording companies use American stuff to pay for our Beethoven. We gramophiles have that satisfaction, and so let Miss Aileen Stanley and others sing their tawdry, unhealthy rubbish in peace.

I am going to award the *Trout Quintet* to Mr. John H. Locke, of 6, Dulwich Road, Radford, Nottingham, for the following letter:

You ask for an essay on "Why I don't like chamber music." I'll try to express my reasons; if I am not quite grammatical I hope you'll excuse the errors; a miner hasn't much chance of education.

Chamber music is rather too dead for me; I haven't heard any that I could feel enthusiastic over; now, I could stand overtures and opera and operatic selections as long as you like; then, again, I cannot see what the composer is trying to express.

The finest overture I have is the H.M.V. *Flying Dutchman* (D.1056). I have it on every other day. I should be bored by any of the chamber music I have heard after the first week. I usually give my new records a run for a month. Then take the usual string quartet. It reproduces into first violin bossing the whole show and the others getting stray words in like a hen-pecked husband or mumbling to and among themselves. This last is the fault of the recording and the first violin, I suppose, being an egoist. (I hope this word is right.)

Last summer, whilst working short time, I heard a lot of chamber music at my dealers, but I did not buy one record of it.

I buy Verdi, Wagner, Rossini, and I have various arias and selections by others; but of the others chamber music has not captured my interest; Wagner's works, excepting *Parsifal*, I could listen to and never be bored.

I am not educated musically to express myself, so I'll give it up. I've picked up what I know about music myself by band concerts and a tribute to Mr. W. Turner and his assistant, Mr. A. A. Wootton (who sent you the photo published on page 322, December, 1925), who have played records for hours at a run for me to lead me on to worth-while music. I have no hope of being in the running for the album, but I hope you'll understand what I'm trying to say.

I don't suppose you have many miners among your readers, and I can assure you that no one reads your esteemed opinions with more interest than

Yours faithfully,
JOHN H. LOCKE.

Of course, a miner's wages don't run to more than one or, at the most, two records a month, so I cannot afford to buy anything I am not quite sure I like.

You will notice that Mr. Locke thinks he would be bored by any chamber music after the first week. Well, if he is bored by the quintet he is to let us know by May 15th, and to the first reader who writes in and claims the records he must surrender them. But I hope that he will give them a good trial and cry "No surrender!"

I had an interesting letter from Miss O. B. L., who has only been converted to music three years, but who has not yet acquired a taste for chamber music. The other day she bought the *Unfinished* and the *Franck Quartet*. At present she can't get on with the quartet. It was rather ambitious of her to skip over Haydn, Mozart, and early Beethoven. I wish instead of buying a quartet of Franck she had bought his sonata. I doubt if I should have been able to enjoy the quartet immediately without having first played the *Sonata*, the *Variations Symphoniques*, and the *Symphony in D* over and over again, as well

as taking every opportunity to hear them publicly performed. Yes, you were rather ambitious, Miss O.B.L. I advise you to get hold somehow of the Franck *Sonata*, played by Thibaud and Cortot, but if the four H.M.V. celebrity records are beyond your means for an experiment, why not buy the shortened Vocalion version at 9s.?

I have given a very careful trial to the new Orchorsol sound-box and on all old recordings it is magnificent. On my Balmain it is exceptionally good—better, indeed, a good deal better, than with its own table model. But I cannot say that I think it succeeds with the new recordings. Whatever the quidnuncs may say, the sound-box which at the moment succeeds best with the new recordings is the H.M.V. No. 4.

Mr. Frederick Jackson has kindly sent me his Ruby-Emperor, and on the Balmain-cum-Lifebelt it gave what I think to most people would sound the best reproduction of the Grainger *Sonata*. But to my taste it seemed rather to grangerise Grainger. In spite of the reproaches of die-hard correspondents who seem to think that I have gone back *per aspera ad Astra*, my conscience is unruffled. I do not consider that the No. 4 sound-box has sacrificed the treble to the bass. As for volume, that can always be regulated by using soft-tone needles. On old recordings the new Orchorsol sound-box is superb, but the new Orchorsol sound-box does not do justice to the new recordings, and I don't believe that any small diaphragm can. The Ruby-Emperor is excellent except for the orchestra; but it is too sluggish to respond to the detail, and the blur which is not displeasing in a piano record is fatal. I remember—it seems a century ago—writing that I had got the best results with piano records from an Ultone box and Sympathetic Chromic needles. The Ruby-Emperor is an improved—a very much improved—Ultone. Owing to my room's being congested with machines I cannot get at my Orchestrphone, but when my new room is finished I'm looking forward to some interesting experiments on that with the new records and I expect some good results. I received a week or two ago a Dousona portable which is really astonishing value and can hold its own with most table models I know. Nobody who is thinking of a portable for the summer should fail to hear this Dousona model. I have not had an opportunity of testing it against other portables, but that it seems so good when I have turned aside from the Balmain and the new H.M.V. and newly equipped Orchorsol to try it with various records is perhaps in some ways a better tribute to its merit than a test against its compeers.

A correspondent kindly writes to remind me that Miss Thursfield made her début on the gramophone in the Columbia record of *Madame Noy*. I thought *Madame Noy* a tiresome piece of *faux bon*. I'm afraid I thought that Miss Thursfield felt it was most

awfully clever and amusing, which prejudiced me against her singing, and though I had forgotten it was she who sang *Madame Noy*, the old prejudice was renewed unconsciously when I listened to her first record with H.M.V.

This number completes the third year of THE GRAMOPHONE. I hope that all those kind people who wrote to me during the first week of its existence have not repented of their applause.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.

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The End of the Volume

The index to this volume will be ready for distribution by June 1st. The price of it will be one shilling for all who send the coupon on page xxviii and the money before that date. After June 1st the price will be 2s.

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THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

Covent Garden Opera and Gems from Half-Forgotten Operas—III.

IF starvation whets the appetite, and it inevitably must, then surely London should be very hungry indeed for the operatic feast that lies before it. Here in this gigantic metropolis of ours we have had no opera to speak of since the last international season ended nine months ago. The fact is rather discreditable, but no good will come of dwelling upon it now. The remedy lies in the future—in the realisation of somebody's scheme—Mr. Isidore de Lara's or another's—for providing London with a large opera-house at which opera can be given at cheap prices and mainly in English all the year round. Anyhow, we ought not to go on being starved as we have been of late.

Meanwhile there is distinct compensation for our long abstention in the high order of the artistic menu laid before us by the London Opera Syndicate for the coming eight weeks at Covent Garden; and there is also solid ground for satisfaction in the generous advance support—the largest known in recent times—that has been accorded to the present undertaking. I think we may take for granted that, whatever may happen, Covent Garden and its "grand" season are in no imminent danger of extinction. The market and its purlieus may disappear, but the opera-house will not go with them so long as society and the wealthier patrons of high-class opera continue willing to pay the necessary prices for the international article, as the Americans do. No one has the right to complain on this score. The two things—expensive opera and good cheap opera—are as distinct from each other as are luxuries and the ordinary necessities of comfortable living. Costly singers are for those who can afford to pay to hear them; and, seeing that they help to keep up our standard, I should be the last to grumble if conditions permit of their visiting us occasionally.

Among the fifty odd artists engaged for the season which begins on May 10th, not more than a dozen are unfamiliar to connoisseurs of the gramophone. All the prominent musical nationalities are represented, from Italian to Scandinavian, from Russian to British—quite an unusual proportion indeed of the last named. Yet very few are absolutely newcomers, and of these the most interesting, I imagine, will be Mariano Stabile, the young Sicilian baritone, of whose Don Giovanni report speaks so highly. Personally I am extremely

curious to hear him in this important rôle, for it is many years since the "perfidious Don" has had a truly great delineator in London. As for the final quintet, which Bruno Walter has determined to revive for us, I should hardly think it has been done here within living memory—certainly not in my own.

Another interesting début will be that of the Belgian soprano, Fanny Heldy, one of the favourites of the Paris Opéra-Comique, who is to appear as the heroines of Massenet's *Manon* and Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnole*. According to all accounts she is a lively actress and a charming singer. Her Des Grieux in *Manon* will be that splendid tenor Fernand Anseu, who returns heavily laden with New York laurels. In connection with the Italian and French operas a third important début will be the conductor's. Vincenzo Bellezza was the friend and accompanist of Caruso and was with him when he died. He comes here with a wonderful reputation, won first of all as a prodigy, then as a conductor at the San Carlo at the age of 20, and subsequently a brilliant career with the bâton all over Italy, Spain, and South America. I hope Bellezza will prove as gifted as he seems to be, and there will be no lack of opportunity for proving it. It is when a conductor has to do with big artists that he proves his strength, and the chance will be forthcoming when he faces Chaliapine in the *Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Mefistofele*, not to mention Jeritza in *Thaïs* and the *Gioielli della Madonna*. He is likewise to direct Dame Melba's farewell performance in opera as Mimi in *La Bohème*.

Most of the German protagonists were here last season—the ladies, at any rate; and some of them will be heard in the revivals of *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*. The principal airs they have already recorded in their own language (which is the one they are to use in *Figaro* now), and I have duly noticed some of them in my monthly review column. It will be doubly interesting, therefore, to listen to Lotte Lehmann as the Countess and Donna Elvira; to Elisabeth Schumann as Zerlina and Susanna; to Frida Leider as Donna Anna; and to Richard Mayr as Figaro. Even more notable, in a sense, will be the return after several years' absence of that fine bass singer, Marcel Journet, in his old part of Leporello. His début at Covent Garden in 1897 was little

noticed, eclipsed as he then was by Edouard de Reszke and Plançon; but as the seasons rolled on he succeeded to more important rôles, and rose steadily in public esteem, until the war came and America monopolised his winters, France the rest of his year. Since then he has made more records, I suppose, than any other Frenchman singing in either of those countries, while recently he has been winning additional fame at La Scala. Journet must now be in his prime. Another welcome return will be that of Giovanni Zenatello, the famous tenor who married Maria Gay. He appeared here first in 1905 and last in 1914, when his *Otello* was greatly admired. He is now to sing this part with Lotte Lehmann for his Desdemona and Mariano Stabile as Iago—a strong combination.

The solitary cycle of the *Nibelungen*, which starts on the second night of the season, will be performed without cuts, and Gertrude Kappel will be the Brünnhilde. It will perhaps introduce a new Siegfried in another New York favourite, Rudolf Laubenthal, who is, we are told, a "young and handsome man." He will also sing Tristan, with Leider as Isolde, Olczewska as Brangäne, and Richard Mayr as King Marke. In the *Meistersinger* we are to have Fritz Krauss as Walther, Lotte Lehmann as Eva, Emil Schipper as Hans Sachs, and Eduard Habich as Beckmesser. Altogether the German casts promise to be exceptionally strong, and, under the able guidance of Bruno Walter they cannot fail to yield some splendid performances.

Some good Russian artists were heard at Covent Garden in the performance of a concert version of Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera, *The Sacred City of Kitesh*, given by the B.B.C. on March 30th. Under the conditions it was extremely well rendered, but without stage action and accessories one cannot fairly judge a mystical lyric play of this type. Anyhow, little if any of the music would lend itself to gramophonic purposes, nor would the characters themselves possess the least attraction unless interpreted by artists of Russian nationality and of the same calibre as these. I should like to hear more of Mme. Smirnova, who is an admirable singer, despite her tremolo; of Pozemkovsky, a fine dramatic tenor; of Popov, a serious comedian and clever singer who by sheer facial art depicts a strange fantastic figure; and, above all, Mosjourkin, a real *basso profondo* with the style of a Chaliapine.

FRENCH OPERAS—continued.

In resuming—and concluding—my "Half-forgotten" series, I would like to make it clear, in order to save correspondents trouble, that I do not pretend to make these retrospective articles of mine exhaustive. I cover the ground as well as I can in my endeavour to give information concerning operas and records that have found a place in the various catalogues. But, for one reason or another,

there are bound to be missing items that have escaped the meshes of our net; and I would add that whatever slips through this office is not likely to be easily procurable by the general reader. Criticism in such cases can hardly serve any very useful purpose.

During the early spring of 1914 there was revived at Covent Garden (concurrently with the first production of *Parsifal* in this country) an opera which had not been heard there for 73 years, and then only in the form of an oratorio—a fate that it shared with Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila*. The opera in question was Méhul's *Joseph*. Not a great masterpiece by any means, but an interesting example of lyric writing during the Napoleonic era—1807, to be exact—and always a favourite at the Opéra-Comique, where I heard it well given in 1883. In London we had to listen to it in German, and somehow the elements did not seem to mix, although the dose was thrice repeated. The gem of the score is the tenor romance for Joseph, *A peine au sortir de l'enfance*, the only number reproduced on the gramophone, although the soprano solo for Benjamin is scarcely less charming and ought to be recorded by a Frenchwoman. By a curious caprice the air first named appears in the H.M.V. catalogue under the misleading title of *Champs paternel*, and as such is ably sung by Fernand Anseau (D.B.482) and John McCormack (D.B.634). Styles more utterly different it would be difficult to imagine—the former full of life, vigour, and contrast; the other smooth, pleasant, and insinuating, but quite colourless. Both sing in French, and language counts for a good deal. On the whole, for every reason I greatly prefer Anseau's rendering.

Only one fragment from *Joseph*. Only three from another religious (not Biblical) opera, Halévy's *La Juive*, which far exceeded Méhul's in popularity during the middle of the nineteenth century. Brought out at the Paris Opéra in 1835, frequently performed in London in French, Italian, and English, it has grown too frankly old-fashioned to hold the stage here, though the travelling opera companies still, I believe, find it pay for revival. Quite a fuss was made because the original production cost the unheard-of sum of 150,000 francs (then £6,000); but we think in higher figures nowadays. The bass air for the Cardinal, *Si la rigueur*, is very familiar. Excellent records of it have been sung by Mardones (Col. A.5202), Richard Mayr (Pol. 65652), and Ezio Pinza (H.M.V., D.B.698), the first in Italian being the most impressive in volume, the second in German the most lugubrious, and the third, also in Italian, the richest in colour and sentiment. The big tenor air, which Edward Lloyd often used to sing, is reproduced in French by Caruso (*Rachel, quand du Seigneur*, H.M.V., D.B.123) with that manful, robust tone, and animated accent so

characteristic of him. German audiences seem to prefer a more tearful manner of the "sob-stuff" order, at any rate in these religious apostrophes; and such are the two Polydor records by Leo Slezák (*Recha, als Gott dich einst*, 65769) and Richard Schubert (65618), though both are of decided mechanical excellence. Quite on a musical level with the above is the Meyerbeerian soprano air, *Il va venir* (*He will be here*), a first-rate record of which is made by Florence Austral (H.M.V., D.798) with exemplary clearness of tone and diction. More dramatic and emotional are the German versions of Lotte Lehmann (Pol. 72905) and Vera Schwarz (Pol. 15884); but neither is quite so satisfying in effect. The former's tone is very veiled, especially in the medium, and the latter drags nearly every phrase.

An interval of half a century separated the opera just referred to from Edouard Lalo's *Le Roi d'Ys*, a charming work—half romantic, half miracle-play—which has never had a fair chance in this country. It is not big enough for Covent Garden, where it was given in 1902 with Plançon and Journet in the cast, but it contains some delightful music. The *clou* is the simple, diatonic *aubade* for the tenor, Mylio, which I find exquisitely rendered by the Opéra-Comique favourite, M. Clément (Victor 6062), and also nicely sung by Beniamino Gigli (Victor 906), the Frenchman's being, of course, quite the real thing. But what I cannot recommend "at any price" is an H.M.V. example of this piece by Dame Melba. Surely there is plenty of soprano music in the world, without popular prima donnas needing to lay piratical hands on tenor solos just because they happen to be beautiful.

Patrie! is an opera by Paladilhe (who died quite recently), founded upon Sardou's moving spectacular play, and was produced in Paris in 1886 with a cast that included the incomparable Mme. Krauss, Jean Lassalle, and Edouard de Reszke. It was a magnificent performance, but I found the work dreadfully tedious. It is still given occasionally in France, but all that immediately concerns us are two H.M.V. records of some interest, chiefly for the personality of the singers—one Emil de Gogorza's *Air du Sonneur* (D.B. 625), the other Titta Ruffo's *Pauvre martyr obscur!*—and of these I can only say that each exemplifies good singing and good recording. Side by side with these may be coupled two more records of a favourite excerpt from a more than half-forgotten opera, to wit, the *Bourbonnaise*, otherwise *L'Eclat de Rire*, alias *C'est l'histoire amoureuse*, from Auber's *Manon Lescault*, made for H.M.V. by Galli-Curci (D.A.215) and Evelyn Scotney (D.968). Although both display clever technique, the result is no longer the infectious laugh intended by the composer. It sounds more like a staccato study; and as such one grows rather tired of it. But is this really all there is for gramophonists to enjoy from

Auber's extensive output of fascinating melody? Putting aside *Fra Diavolo* as being his quite unforgotten masterpiece, has no one yet fished for gems in *Masaniello* (*La Muette de Portici*), *Les Diamans de la Couronne*, *Le Domino Noir*, or even *L'Ambassadrice*?

MODERN ITALIAN OPERAS.

Reckoning the nineteenth century—all Verdi, for instance, previously dealt with—as part of this category of modern semi-failures, the same question arises. I am, I know, omitting excerpts from many bygone favourites that are not yet consigned to oblivion elsewhere, if they are in England. But even so, can it be that the exploiters of the gramophone have no use for the splendid vocal pieces interred in the neglected scores of Bellini, Rossini, and Donizetti? Surely not. A few, but only a few, of Donizetti's have been rescued, at any rate—thanks chiefly to the industry of Caruso and Battistini; and I have listened to them with genuine enjoyment. The famous tenor has left a superb record of *Deserto sulla terra*, which Gayarre used to introduce in *La Favorita*, but entitled *In terra solo* in the H.M.V. list (D.B.700). It occurs in *Dom Sebastiano*, an opera which owed its failure to one of Scribe's very worst libretti, written for the French stage in 1843. A record of the same air by Alfred Piccaver (Pol. 72877) can only be described as a slavish imitation of Caruso's. Finer still is the latter's rendering (and the music) of the air, *Angelo casto e bel*, from *Il Duca d'Alba* (D.B.640), a smooth *cantilena* cast in the purest Donizettian mould, sung with rare emotional fervour and rising with a big *crescendo* to a glorious climax. Battistini has recorded extracts from *Maria di Rohan* and *Maria di Rudenz*; but the best of his is also from *Dom Sebastiano*, namely, the celebrated *O Lisbona* (H.M.V., D.B.207)—suave, elegant, and refined—other records of which have been admirably furnished by Granforte (D.B. 834) and Eric Marshall (Voc. K.05143). With mention of these I take leave of the type of opera that was in vogue during the "palmy days" of Covent Garden and Her Majesty's.

What was termed the "Young Italy" school, began to forge ahead soon after the advent of *Aida*. The real impetus dates from the production of the revised version of Boito's *Mefistofele* at Bologna in 1875. Five years before that we had also heard of a new opera called *Il Guarany*, by a youthful Brazilian, Carlos Gomez, of whom great things were expected by the *habitués* of La Scala. However, when the work was mounted at Covent Garden in 1872, it failed to catch on, notwithstanding the efforts of such singers as Faure, Nicolini, Cotogni, Bagagiolo, and the fascinating Mlle. Sessi. Struggles between Spanish and Portuguese adventurers in the wilds of Brazil could not, after all, greatly excite European audiences before the days of the cinema-

film, however picturesque the music. Nevertheless, the Fonotipia provides several reminiscences of an opera that is still to be heard in South America; while H.M.V. has an excellent record of the melodious duet, *Sento una forza indomita* (D.B.616), sung with immense spirit and vocal beauty by Caruso and Emmy Destinn. The former has also done ample justice to the well-known song *La mia piccirella* (H.M.V., D.B.144), from *Salvator Rosa*, another opera by the same composer—which song Mme. Albani introduced over here many years ago. It is a tenor piece by rights, but can be no less effectively sung by a soprano.

Another twenty years and Mascagni and Leoncavallo had arrived. But, alas, the brilliant triumphs of *Cavalleria Rusticana* (1890) and *Pagliacci* (1892) were never afterwards approached by either maestro. The tale of half-successes henceforward grows too lengthy to be followed. What is it that is just missing in some of these operas, scattered with charming *morceaux*, that would maybe have converted failure into the other thing? Almost always, of course, it is the crass stupidity of the libretto that is to blame. Yet not invariably. The poetry of Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz* and his *Iris* is quite on a level with his music; and the former—done at Covent Garden in 1892, with Calvé, Giulia Ravogli, and the tenor De Luca—ought to be as popular as *Cavalleria* is to-day. On the other hand, his second opera, *I Rantzau*, proved to be one of the most tedious affairs that a poor critic ever had to sit out; it was done once in 1893—and never again. But, apart from the little Sicilian masterpiece, I have no records of anything out of these operas. So far as the gramophone is concerned, Leoncavallo has been luckier. His *Zazà* and his *Bohème* have been plentifully and faithfully recorded, the former in particular. Caruso, as usual, working in America, did not overlook the talented compatriot who had inspired him with *Vesti la giubba*. He lavished his opulent resources upon two airs from *La Bohème* (both on H.M.V., D.B.122), duly imitated by Piccaver (Pol. 70768). Again, Martinelli excelled himself in two from *Zazà* (H.M.V., D.A.329); while the delightful *canzone popolare*, known as *Zazà, piccola zingara!* has been recorded in turn by Titta Ruffo, Stracciari, Amato, Sammarco, De Luca, and the Germans, Scheidl, Schlusnus, and Schwarz, which ought to be about enough, without mentioning the duet *Il Bacio* (no connection with Arditi's celebrated waltz), sung by Geraldine Farrar and De Luca (H.M.V., D.A.209). Yet, in spite of all this, Leoncavallo's *Zazà* has never been thought worthy of production in London. There are doubtless excellent reasons for it.

RUBINSTEIN AND TCHAIKOVSKY.

The great pianist, Anton Rubinstein, has yet to be appreciated at his true worth as an operatic

composer. The simple truth is that we were not ready for Russian music of any sort 45 years ago, when his opera *The Demon* was produced in Italian at Covent Garden. In common with most other people who heard it then, I thought it over-heavy and monotonous, albeit splendidly sung by Albani, Trebelli, Lassalle, Marini, and Edouard de Reszke. With a cast like that I might think differently now, though I am not altogether sure. The music, at any rate, or some of the best of it, has been preserved for us by Chaliapine and Baklánov, and I unhesitatingly commend to my readers their respective records (H.M.V., D.B.611 and D.A.465). Both contain on either side magnificent specimens of vocal and recording technique. No less praiseworthy are two Italian reproductions from Rubinstein's *Nero*, an opera very different in character to Boito's, which it preceded by many years, although designed at about the same period—the late seventies. These comprise a sorrowful air with a pretty harp accompaniment, sung by Caruso the tireless (*Ah mon sort*, H.M.V., D.B.127); and a declamatory *Epitalamio* (D.B.211), rather explosive for a wedding chant, vigorously given by Battistini. A word of praise must also be accorded Baklánov's dramatic rendering of the air, *I am he whom you called*, on the reverse side of D.A.465, noted above.

I conclude with a Tchaikovsky item. It is not, of course, from *Eugene Onégin*, because that is not a forgotten opera, nor likely to be one yet awhile (though I may mention that Lensky's air, finely sung by Caruso, is on the same disc as the *Nero* extract just referred to). The record which must typify Tchaikovsky here is the tenor solo, *Forgive me*, and *What is my life* (H.M.V., D.A.569) from his *Pique Dame* (*Queen of Spades*), perhaps the most attractive vocal number in the work which Oscar Hammerstein gave at the London Opera House, Kingsway, in 1915. One section is tearful, the other martial; while both are more or less tuneful and sung with abundant expression by Smirnoff, an excellent artist who has, I fancy, been heard here. But the story by Pushkin on which the book is framed is rather far-fetched and violent, and I doubt whether the opera will ever win lasting favour out of Russia.

HERMAN KLEIN.

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P.S.—I am glad to say that henceforward I shall be able to test a due proportion of the records that I write about through the medium of the latest His Master's Voice gramophone. That will be an inestimable advantage, for I already perceive it to be a very wonderful machine—the “last word,” in fact, in every detail that makes for reproductive perfection. As time goes on I shall learn to know it still better and continue, I hope, to chronicle my growingly vivid impressions in these pages.

THE CHILD & THE GRAMOPHONE

By GEOFFREY M. BOUMPHREY

PERHAPS some of our more fanatical readers will consider that the above title should more properly be reversed in order. But even they will admit that, great as the influence of the gramophone may be in their own lives, its effect on the child who is growing up to-day should be very much greater. The purpose of this article is to examine in a common-sense sort of way the principal difficulties that beset the road to a genuine appreciation of *all* music. It is hoped that it may prove of equal value to those who are concerned in developing the taste of a child, as to those would-be musicals who feel that there must be more in music than they are able to get out of it, or to the self-educators who feel that their progress has slowed up or stopped short of the highest. Does all serious music bore you? Or can you find nothing sublime since Beethoven? Does modern music beat you? Or are you afraid that most of Bach is rather dull? Perhaps Wagner is unpleasing to your ear, in spite of a passionate devotion to other forms of opera. In trying to show how a child may be put in the right way to get the very best out of all these things we may well succeed in hauling others back to the high-road from whatever blind alley may have claimed them.

It is hardly realised by that mental slug, the man in the street, into what a morass the general musical taste of the country has been plunged during the past century of commercial progress, and from which it is only now beginning to rear its very miry head. The music-lover, particularly of the male sex, has been rarer than a teetotaller at a wake. Worse still, he has been suspected of all men, regarded as queer, effeminate, almost imbecile, and has been usually dismissed with the pregnant lettering, *b.f.* Contrast this with our same England in the sixteenth century and later, when every gentleman, if sufficiently sober, could take his part in an unrehearsed madrigal after dinner, much as he might now take a hand at bridge. Why, even when engaging a servant, a qualification almost usually looked for was ability to play some instrument or, at least, to sing from score. It seems unlikely that any radical change in the national brain has taken place in the last couple of centuries; and we are therefore justified in embarrassing the unmusical by declaring that almost everyone is potentially musical, but that, in the majority the sense has never been developed beyond a rudimentary stage or has atrophied entirely. This may be recommended as an excellent way of annoying any musical cretin who is inclined to exalt his disability into a virtue.

Now the gramophone, aided latterly by wireless, is changing all this. The spread of music during the last ten years has been simply amazing, and in a very short time we are going to reach and pass the level of any previous period in the general appreciation of music. Let us pause while we are here to find out what is meant by "being musical." There is no doubt that, in the popular opinion, it still connotes one who performs well or ill on some musical instrument (among which the human throat is optimistically included) or, more rarely still, one of those queerly warped infra-humans who compose. Note the pathetic haste of the disclaimer, so often heard: "I like it, but I don't *do* anything myself," with its humble insinuation that the speaker cannot therefore claim to be musical. What wants stating very loudly and often, is that the bare fact of being musical carries—or should carry—no implication whatever of any executive or even articulate critical ability. One can go further and say that in a pathetically large number of cases the development of executive powers has been the cause of more or less serious damage to the appreciative side. To be musical means merely to be capable of taking some pleasure in music, and is a state having many degrees. As with every other subject, to be a true initiate one must progress by steps, learning all the way; and though the way is so pleasant that it would be misleading to talk of "taking pains," yet there are pitfalls. As the would-be initiate into the mysteries of ancient Egypt was unexpectedly confronted after great terrors and austerities with an alluring Nubian lady, well learned in her art, so the aspiring music-lover may find himself seduced by the sweet siren sentimentality; nor is the penalty for yielding much different in either case: life-long slavery in the courts of the temple—except that the modern recusant usually refuses to see his fault and glories in his shame. He must steer the difficult course between the Scylla of emotionalism and the Charybdis of dry intellectuality. He may get isolated on the arid peaks of high-browism or bogged in the slough of cant. But, however he goes, he will find a very good staff or alpenstock or rudder or rubric (according to which of my many metaphors he fancies) in the gramophone; its use will preserve him through many of the perils of the road (or sea or what-not).

Before examining the route in detail and erecting a few signposts for the guidance of the child, in years or music, let us define exactly what we are hoping to achieve. We are aiming to produce the ideal musical appreciator—horrid, hackneyed phrase,

which yet conveys its meaning rather more exactly than does any other—one who shall be able to get the utmost out of every kind of music. What do we require of him? (1) His ear must have retained its delicacy of perception, not been battered into semi-consciousness by the reiterated thumping of Beethoven sonatas during adolescence. (2) He must have learned enough of the technical and historical sides to know what to look for—and, perhaps more important, what not to look for. Yet, with this, (3), he must be utterly catholic and free from bias—unlike the lady in “The Way of all Flesh,” to whom one single chord of Beethoven was perfect bliss—presumably even though it be the solitary chord of C major; nor must he confuse the issue between the noise and the one who makes it: he will not rank “The Rosary” any higher as music even when sung by the most fabulously prima donna (not, that I decry the candied appeal of this work; on the contrary, heard on a street band, preferably after a good lunch and on a wet day, it makes a very soul-snaring appeal to me).

That would seem to be enough to go on with. Now where does the gramophone come in?

(1) It is dreadful to think of the number of people who have been permanently prejudiced against music by their inability to stand the torture of hearing it badly played—by themselves or by others. Only a very small proportion of the present grown up generations had the opportunity of forming a love for good music by hearing it adequately performed; the remainder owe their introduction to their own horrid efforts and those of their fellows, with an occasional perfunctory scamper through by their teacher—“to show how it goes.” What wonder that many recoiled—and they the most sensitive and therefore the most desirable. Not knowing that good music must have good execution, while bad music can get away with anything, they laid the blame at their own door, and, deciding that they could not be musical, had no more to do with it. Now, thanks to the gramophone and wireless, they are creeping back in hundreds of thousands, trying to free the faculties stiffened by years of disuse, puzzled by many things, but still clinging stoutly to *Poet and Peasant* and *The Indian Love Lyrics*.

What a different prospect for the child of to-day! Aided by the gramophone, it can range freely from Bach to Berlin, hearing everything almost perfectly performed; and can thus lay more than the foundations of a sound musical taste, before its ear need ever be troubled by the noises of its own apprenticeship—if, indeed, it must ever so be troubled. To me it seems far more important that the majority should learn to love music well in the hearing, than that they should struggle without natural advantages to reach an indifferent standard of execution. I know that this opinion stands up to be shot at by many;

and I realise that in some music, chamber music especially, a greater pleasure can be had by playing it than by merely hearing it played (great though this be); yet, striking a general balance, I think that it is a mistake to drive any child to learn an instrument, except its own voice, unless it shows a definite inclination that way. There will always be enough born with the unmistakable urge, especially now when the poor old discredited ether is packed full of music—and it is so hard to suffer musical fools gladly! Spare them the purgatory and spend the money for their lessons on letting them hear music. There is more than enough to fill a lifetime in learning to listen.

(2) When an unmusical person listens to serious music (driven to it, usually, by an unavoidable combination of circumstances) he little thinks that the chief cause of his undoing is his bad memory. Yet so it is. He is like an old lady struggling to read a novel, regardless of the fact that her memory is too bad for her to remember even the sentence before the one she is at. The old lady throws down the book in disgust or nods off to sleep; our unmusical person does the latter.

Here the gramophone offers a temporary solution beyond the powers of either concert or wireless; one can indulge in unlimited repetition. Nevertheless, the memory must be trained. Every composer repeats his tunes sufficiently to drive them into the head of an average listener; but he obviously cannot cater for the dullard without boring the others. Even so, to modern ears the repetitions of the older composers, who did not expect their music to be bottled up for daily consumption, seem excessive at times; and the modern does not indulge in them to the same extent.

It is not a long nor difficult business to grow a musical memory sufficiently long for general purposes. Realise, first of all, that a piece of music is not an aimless ramble along one extended tune, but that the same tune and others keep popping in and out on something like a definite plan. Keep to short pieces at first. Most of these go: first tune, second tune, first tune—which is called Simple Ternary Form. From this it is an easy step to rondo: first, second, first, third, first, second, first; and so on to sonata form, which has nothing to do with sonatas, except that one or two movements of the latter and of other big compositions are usually in it. At this stage a little book on musical form is really worth the few pence it costs, since one learns from it what to look out for and when.

The preceding couple of paragraphs are rather for the benefit of the backward grown-up than for the child, which will develop its own musical memory without trouble if given the music to listen to, and can be introduced to musical form very gradually by occasional games of “Find the Tune.”

(To be continued.)

NEGLECTED COMPOSERS

By W. A. CHISLETT

I.—Hugo Wolf

IN spite of the bold statement by so eminent a musician as Mr. Ernest Newman in his monograph published so far back as 1907 that he has "no hesitation in putting him at the head of the song writers of the world" Hugo Wolf is by no means appreciated at his true worth even to-day, and whether we agree or not with Mr. Newman, it is an undisputable fact that a very large number of these songs will richly repay far more study and attention than they usually receive. In studying the songs of Hugo Wolf, as in studying all music, due regard must be paid to the period in the history of music in which they were written. This fact is not always appreciated to the full for which reason any statement defining a certain individual as the "greatest" is very open to misconstruction. It is often said that Wagner is greater than Mozart as a composer of opera. In the sense that Wagner had, because of the progress due to the effluxion of time, a more suitable and fully-developed foundation upon which to work, and used it as successfully as Mozart used the less adaptable opportunities of his age, this is undeniable. In a similar sense, and surely this is what Mr. Newman means, Wolf may be said to be a greater song writer than even Schubert.

From his youth Wolf was a great reader and, good taste being inherent, he gradually became intimately acquainted with the great writers of Europe. Selecting individual poems which aroused his lyrical spirit, he wrote songs in which music and words are made to fit so meticulously and in which the music seems to contain so much of the spirit of the poems as to make one feel, as Mr. Haward says, that "poetry and music are the simultaneous product of one brain."

Hugo Wolf, born at Windischgraz in Austria on March 13th, 1860, was the son of a leather merchant. Showing signs of unusual musical ability at an early age, this talent was cultivated at home. He commenced to receive regular instruction when 10 years old and, from 1871 to 1873, was educated in the Benedictine Monastery of St. Paul and later at Marburg. It had been intended that he should join his father in business, but at the age of 15 the taste for music was so predominant that the youth, receiving the reluctant consent of his parents, entered the Conservatoire at Vienna. He only remained there for two years, being expelled by the director, but during this time he received what was perhaps his life's inspiration on meeting Wagner in 1875 and hearing him conduct *Tannhäuser*, conceiving an admiration for the Master that

amounted almost to hero worship and which was lifelong. His father's business having been ruined by fire, Wolf was now thrown on his own resources and eked out an existence by giving lessons on the piano and violin until he received the appointment of second conductor at Salzburg. He only kept this post for a few weeks; then he returned to Vienna and shortly, in 1884, accepted the post of music critic of the *Salonblatt*, a popular Vienna newspaper, in whose columns he expressed strong views in favour of the classical composers and Wagner, and made his famous attacks on Brahms. He retained this appointment until 1887 in which year his first songs were published.

From this time Wolf's life was an alternation of furious bursts of energy and periods of absolute lethargy. As examples of the speed with which he worked when so moved, he composed 44 out of the 53 Mörike songs in three months and completed the series some months later in a week. Similarly, he wrote the Goethe cycle in a little over eight weeks, while the whole of his only completed opera—*Der Corregidor*—was composed between March and July, 1895. In 1897, while working hard at another opera and translating into German some of Michaelangelo's sonnets, he broke down owing to a disease of the mind which eventually culminated in insanity and in his death in an asylum in Vienna on February 22nd, 1903.

It is as a song writer that the name of Hugo Wolf will live, but there are two other works that might well be recorded—the string quartet in D minor, which is an early work, and the beautiful *Italian Serenade*, originally written for a string quartet but later arranged for a small orchestra.

The only songs recorded by the English companies are *Wo find' ich Trost*, by John McCormack (H.M.V., D.B.766), and *Auf dem grünen Balkon* and *Verborgenheit* by Elena Gerhardt (H.M.V., D.A.715), but the Polydor catalogue contains quite a lot, many of which, by the courtesy of Messrs. A. Imhof of 110 New Oxford Street, W.C.1, I have been able to hear. The following are the best:—

14605. *Elfenlied*. Elizabeth van Endert.

62381. *In dem Schatten meiner Locken*. Ernestine Färber-Strasser.

62407. *Fussreise* and *Gesang Weylas*. Joseph Groenen.

70690. *Der Bekehrte*. Claire Dux.

70660. *Der Rattenfänger* and *Verschwiegene Liebe*. Heinrich Schlusnus.

W. A. CHISLETT.

FERNAND ANSSEAU

By JOHN F. PORTE

FOR gramophonists who did not attend the Covent Garden season of 1919, Fernand Anseau can prove to be a fine discovery; while those who have heard him, either in London or at the Paris Opéra, will not miss hearing him this season at Covent Garden. Anseau is a Belgian, born in 1899, at Boussu-Bons, not far from Mons. In French opera he is, I think, the supreme tenor of to-day. Apart from this, I am sure that he can give sheer delight as a singer, especially to the many ears that are fast tiring of the desperate energy of Italian tenors. I cannot presume to judge the technique of Anseau's singing while the present paper can command the services of so experienced and able a writer on singers as Mr. Herman Klein. It is a tribute to M. Anseau that one can discuss his art as that of a fine and sensitive musician. He has recorded for "His Master's Voice" in France and England. The musician will not fail to notice the great refinement of Anseau's emotion — passion that is absolutely under control — and the sincerity of his interpretations. His record of the *Flower Song* from Bizet's *Carmen* (D.B.482), will demonstrate this to the gramophonist. Perhaps this is the finest rendering of the famous aria. On the reverse side is the stirring *Champs paternels!* from Méhul's *Joseph in Egypt*. John McCormack has made records of both arias, but I would recommend those of Anseau if only because they are naturally much more true to French opera.

Tenor arias by Massenet naturally figure in the list of Anseau's gramophone records. Massenet is one of those composers who suffer from the hasty, but firmly traditional, judgments of Anglo-Saxon writers on music. His operas are said to be of the "lighter style." Compared with Wagner this is so.

But many of the musical traditions in England were inspired under Teutonic influence. Massenet was very and truly French, and therefore not easily appreciated by German, or German-inspired, listeners. It is better to say Massenet is "different," and leave it at that. I would especially recommend Anseau's record of *The Dream* from Massenet's *Manon* (D.B.486). In this one may find the singing of an artist of the most refined order, and the aria is given a wistful charm that is very appealing.

On the reverse side is the contrasting *Ah! lève-toi, soleil*, from Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, also finely sung. The arias from Massenet's *Werther* and *Hérodiade* (D.B. 485 and D.B. 623) are interesting. One may note how Anseau absorbs the desolate self-pity of Werther, and can transfer to the fiery ardour of John the Baptist.

The *Lohengrin* (Wagner) records (D.A. 614) are worth studying. I have always thought that this is the Wagner opera that Paris can do best, although the effect of the translation is sometimes serio-comic. Anseau sings the two extracts on D.A.614 as if he believes in them, and that is an ideal for any singer. In fact, sincerity is a keynote of Anseau's art, and with it goes good taste. I do not think he ever bellows, for which let us be thankful. Vocal horse-power is not the

measurement with which he seeks to impress. He is not an Italian. The fault in the *Lohengrin* records is that the singer was too near the recording horn, and therefore we cannot get the orchestra without being deafened by the voice.

In conclusion it may incidentally be remarked that Anseau's French is very easy for English ears to follow. The somewhat more deliberate and broader Belgian pronunciation of the language can help students who wish to follow the tongue clearly.



ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

By P. WILSON

XIII.—Record Wear with Fibre Needles

IN a footnote to my March article I advised readers not to play Parlophone records with fibre needles. The advice was based upon a number of reports received from trustworthy correspondents and upon a few observations of my own. After a few playings with fibres the records begin to develop grey lines and eventually, if playing with fibres is continued, the needle drags in the groove and either pulls up the motor or begins to tear the surface of the record. I have not noticed these effects with any but fibre needles and I observe that in their latest catalogue the Parlophone Company recommend that their records should be played with hard steel needles.

Realising, however, that there are quite a number of gramophonists who prefer to use fibre needles, I have studied the problem more thoroughly and have come to the conclusion that the effects described above can be cured and, with a little care, avoided altogether. It is not a particularly pleasant process to play the same record continuously for over two hours, but I have cheerfully submitted myself to the task on more than one occasion in order to determine the cause of the trouble and the method of cure.

My experiments were made in the best conditions for fibre reproduction that I know. I used new records which had been obtained direct from the factors and played them with good, clean, unoiled fibres in a sound-box specially tuned for fibre needles. The needle-track alignment was as perfect as I know how to make it. In these conditions I was able to play one side of Emmy Bettendorf's *Fledermaus* record 25 times without re-cutting and even then the fibre point still gave good reproduction. The grey lines began to be noticeable at about the sixth playing, but there was practically no increase after about the tenth playing. After 25 playings I re-sharpened the point and went on re-sharpening at each successive playing. In these conditions the grey lines increased more rapidly. Throughout the experiments I examined the record surface under a strong magnifying glass and the fluff brought up by the needle under a microscope.

My observations were as follows:—

(a) At the beginning a certain amount of blackish material was mixed with the fluff, but the proportion decreased with subsequent playings.

(b) The grey lines appeared principally at the

outside of the record and not at the inside and more wavy parts of the groove, as is usually the case with grey lines produced by steel needles.

(c) The grey lines were continuous smears at the very bottom of the groove and not in the form of dotted lines on the sides of the groove, such as steel needles produce.

(d) They are produced most when the fibre needle is badly cut, *i.e.*, when it has a ragged point.

(e) Apart from that, re-pointing a needle at each playing is favourable to their development.

The effects, therefore, are quite distinct from those of steel needle wear and different also from the usual forms of fibre-clogging. The latter can often be removed by playing through with a fine steel needle, but these smears were immune from that treatment. They disappeared, however, when I rubbed the record surface with a mixture of half a teaspoonful of vinegar to a saucer of water, dried the surface thoroughly with a clean cloth, and then treated the record in the usual manner with Glissoline. After this treatment the records were as good as, if not better than, new.

As a result of these experiments I came to the conclusion that there was something on the record surface which has a tendency to melt and become sticky under the very considerable fibre friction. This friction is greater than that with a steel needle and is more effective, since the fibre is a bad conductor of heat. I understand, too, that Parlophone records have a sharper V-crutch than other makes, so that a fibre will ride in more intimate contact with the lower parts of the groove.

At first I thought that the substance in question was in the record material itself. But as a result of some experiments with a surface dressing sent to me by the Orchorsol Company, I am now inclined to think that it is a greasy material which gets on to the record in the factory and is polished into it and hardened in the buffing process. This happens to some extent with *all* makes of records, but in Parlophones the substance seems to be more intractable to fibres. The Orchorsol dressing loosens it and fetches it up on the needle-point during the first few playings, after which the record plays well with fibres. I am making some further tests of this dressing and will report the results later.

P. WILSON.

CREDE EXPERTO

A Current Survey of Gramophone Progress

By OUR EXPERT COMMITTEE

X.—THE ORCHORSOL.

IT is over six months ago that we made our first test of the Orchorsol, the machine on that occasion being the £10 "Junior" model which won the gold medal at the Caxton Hall tests. We realised that our verdict might unconsciously be affected by this public success, but after making every allowance for that fact our opinion of the Orchorsol remained a very high one. Our subsequent tests of a number of other gramophones have also served to confirm and strengthen that opinion. Our report, however, has been held over pending the production of the new sound-box which the Orchorsol Company have at last put on the market. Month after month we have been awaiting the announcement of that box, but many unexpected difficulties have been encountered, particularly, we understand, in connection with the design, manufacture, and material of the stylus-bar. It is a curious fact that many writers on gramophone technique have treated the stylus bar with scant courtesy. Thus in "Tips" Mr. Barnett says that "so long as reasonable non-flexibility and avoidance of too great mass in the diaphragm end of the bar be secured, little else seems to matter very much." A similar statement was made by Mr. W. E. Clifton in an article on the Cliftophone published in "English Mechanics" some two or three years ago. We are fully convinced, however, that the design and the material of the stylus-bar do have a considerable effect on the reproduction. We shall have more to say on this subject in a future article. We mention the point here merely as an indication of the thoroughness with which the Orchorsol Company have tackled the problem of sound-box making. Another indication to the same effect is the adoption of the principle of flexibility in the tone-arm connection. As the Editor remarked in the last number, this part of the Orchorsol sound-box had been decided upon some time before the Lifebelt was announced.

For our second test the instrument was the standard table model, fitted with the new sound-box and a longer tone-arm. With the longer tone-arm the alignment is very good indeed with a needle angle of 70° , the angle which is recommended by the Company for the new sound-box. Hitherto the Orchorsol machines have been constructed to give their smallest error of alignment with a needle angle of 45° ; the Junior model in these conditions gave an error varying from plus 7° at the outer groove to minus 7° at the inner groove of a 12in. record, but

with a needle angle of 60° or over the error at the inner grooves of the record became much more serious. The new model which we tested had an error of less than 2° at all parts of a 12in. record, provided that the needle angle was adjusted to 70° . In order that there shall be no mistake about the matter the Company supply a neat celluloid protractor with which to measure the needle angle and a cardboard alignment indicator to measure the error of alignment. We heartily approve of this change of policy, not only because of the importance which we attach to good alignment—and this is more necessary than ever for records made under the new system of recording—but also because we are in favour of a steeper angle than 45° .

Our second test extended over a week. At the beginning we used the sound-box supplied with the machine, but this was afterwards purloined by the London Editor and taken to the wilds of Sussex for trial on his new H.M.V. machine. Another sound-box was therefore procured from the company and this second sound-box was in some respects slightly better than the first.

We can say at once that the new combination is better than the old, good as that was. For purposes of comparison the makers supplied us with one of the old tone-arms and with the Verloc 43 mm. sound-box which they used with that arm. With the new sound-box the reproduction is fuller and more realistic, particularly with vocal records. The old combination at times had a tendency to give a thin, hard reproduction, though apart from this the quality was distinctly superior to that of most of the gramophones which have been submitted to us for test. The new sound-box removes these faults, and gives a better balance throughout. Two observations puzzled us for some time. We have never classed the Orchorsol as a loud or very forward instrument. The Editor made some remarks upon this subject in his review of the Steinway Hall tests. The new instrument, however, seemed to be less forward than the old; nor did it give the same fine quality of string tone that we had noted in the Junior. An appreciable improvement was made by leaving the lid open, but this was not sufficient to account for all the difference. We found that the new sound-box was not responsible for the difference either. Eventually we traced the effect to the heavy lead backweight which was being used as a counter-balance on the new model. It was not a question of the actual weight on the record; a different form of weight adjuster gave better results

whatever the weight on the record. This conclusion was so unexpected that we spent quite a long time in verifying it. In the end, fully satisfied that we were correct, we informed the Company accordingly.

Within a fortnight they devised a form of weight adjuster on quite novel lines. It consists of a piston working in a tube between two compensating springs. The usual fault of spring adjusters, namely their inconstancy, is avoided by this means. The whole arrangement revolves with the tone-arm, and therefore does not impose side-strain on the groove. The result is entirely satisfactory. The table model which we tested is now more forward, the string tone is improved, and voices are more natural than before. Moreover, the tone now remains unaffected when the lid is closed.

Having satisfied ourselves of the efficiency of the Orchorsol machine we proceeded to examine the new box more thoroughly. The box is of the "Exhibition" size and type with two additional features, namely, insulated spiral springs which work in conjunction with the usual cross tension springs, and a flexible back-plate and rubber-tube connector to the tone-arm. We fancy also that the material of the stylus bar is different from that usually used. We gather from the Company's pamphlet that their object has been to produce a sound-box which should have a deeper tone than the usual 43 mm. box whilst at the same time preserving the virtues of clarity and definition which have made the Exhibition famous. We have long known that such a result is possible, though up to the present it has been only occasionally obtained with sound-boxes produced on a commercial scale. Both the Orchorsol boxes which we tried had this quality of full-bodied resonance combined with clear definition.

We were specially interested in testing the Orchorsol box on a new H.M.V. machine. The model which was available for our use was a £25 oak cabinet, No. 161. On that particular machine the Orchorsol box gave better results, in our opinion, than either a No. 4, a No. 2, or an Exhibition. This was specially marked with the new recording, whether orchestral or vocal. With the Orchorsol box the No. 161 instrument gave a better rendering of the new orchestral records than the Orchorsol machine, but for vocal records the reverse was the case. In making this comparative statement, however, we wish to emphasise the limitations to which it is subject. We obviously cannot say that any Orchorsol box will give better results on *any* of the new H.M.V. models than *any* No. 4, No. 2, or Exhibition box. No sound-box, however good, can possibly suit every type of instrument. But since the Orchorsol Company send out their sound-boxes on approval, this is a matter upon which every owner of a new H.M.V., or indeed any other gramophone, can satisfy himself. We can assure them that the Orchorsol box is well worth a trial.

C

BOOK REVIEW

INTERNATIONALES JAHRBUCH FÜR PHONO-TECHNIK UND PHONOKUNST, 1925, ed. Dr. Rudolf Lothar.

This year-book furnishes much information that is of interest not only to the trade, but also to the general public. It contains articles on "New records issued during 1924" (by the editor), on "Technical Novelties," on "Phono-art and Phono-technics in the U.S.A. during 1924," on "The Talking-machine in the School," on "The Talking-machine in the Service of Education," on "How a needle is produced," on "Gramophone and Radio," etc., etc.

Of special interest to English readers is the article by the editor on new records, for Dr. Lothar quite frankly attributes to the example of England the improvement in artistic value of the German output. England, he says, has produced records of practically all the noteworthy orchestral works of modern times. He notes a certain reluctance in Germany to record ultra-modern music, and commends the Gramophone Company's enterprise in issuing Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. At the same time he regrets that no company has so far recorded Hindemuth's *Suite* 1922. In the sphere of chamber music records, too, he yields the palm to England. "If one wishes to hear *complete* trios, quartets, and quintets, by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms one must go to English records." Although we select for special mention these references to English initiative, we have no wish to minimise the activity of the various companies in other countries. Dr. Lothar gives a very full and sympathetic review of the products of all the large companies, in practically every type of record, not failing to mention the appearance of those giving instructions for physical exercises with accompanying music.

The article on "Technical Novelties" discusses various kinds of spring motors, and also electric motors applied to gramophones. Perhaps the most illuminating part of the article, however, is the discussion of different types of sound-box.

An interesting feature in connection with wireless and the gramophone is pointed out by the writer of the article on "Phono-art in the United States." He declares that the rapidity with which a "popular number" now reaches the world-public, through wireless, has considerably shortened the life of such numbers, with the result that the gramophone companies are fighting shy of recording a song which may very well be a back number by the time the discs are on the market. A striking tribute to the ephemeral nature of the productions of the jazz-merchant! From this article it would appear that the Victor Company is no longer having it all its own way in the States. The American Columbia, Odeon, and Aeolian Companies are forging ahead.

We must pass over many other interesting features of this book and conclude with a reference to the articles on "The Talking-machine in the School" and "The Talking-machine in the Service of Education." The latter deals with the use of the gramophone in teaching foreign languages. "The International Correspondence Schools" have introduced a system whereby students at a distance receive by gramophone record an oral lesson from the teacher. Moreover, as each instrument in use functions also as a dictaphone, the student repeats his prescribed lesson, which is recorded on a disc. This record he send to the teacher, who hears it and makes notes on the result. Thus a personal contact is established between teacher and pupil, which was wanting in the old method of teaching purely by correspondence.

From the article "The Talking-machine in the School" it would appear that the movement known here as the "Musical Appreciation" movement has at last reached Germany, for this article is a plea for the use of the gramophone in fostering a love for and an understanding of good music in the schools. The writer sees in the gramophone a means of carrying out the new regulations for the teaching of music issued by the Education Department, which demand something more than the teaching of songs. He points out what has been going on both in England and America in this direction, and mentions the activities of Percy A. Scholes and Sir Walford Davies with approval.

This "Year Book" is a perfect mine of information as to what is being done in the gramophone world. We should like to see a similar production in this country, but possibly THE GRAMOPHONE has no counterpart in Germany.

A. F. M.

THE MARCH COMPETITIONS

A.—Three Pounds' Worth of Records (winner's choice) for the best list of *Six Pieces for Violin* which have not yet been recorded in an English catalogue. Each piece must be playable in four minutes or less.

The entries were not numerous and the lists not very interesting, but the competition itself was not very interesting except for those who had the requisite knowledge and patience and who sympathised with the strong views on the subject expressed by our reviewer on page 443 of the February number.

In one respect we have been very fortunate. We were privileged to submit the competing lists to the judgment of Mr. Albert Sammons, than whom it would be hard to find a more practically experienced critic; and if any good suggestions were made we may be sure that Mr. Sammons himself will take advantage of them, and the object of the competition will have been achieved.

The two best lists in his opinion are those of W. O. Goffton and George Williamson. Unfortunately each contains a work already recorded and must be disqualified. The former suggests: *Spanish Dance* (Moszkowski), *L'oiseau prophète* (Schumann), *Prelude in E* (Bach-Kreisler), *Danse Lente* (César Franck), *Zigeunerweisen* or *Gipsy Airs* (Sarasate), and *Valse in E minor* (Chopin-Ysaye). The latter suggests: *Caprice No. 23* (Paganini), *Romance* (Palmgren), sketch from *Scheherazade*, *Danse Oriental* (Rimsky-Korsakov), as played by Kreisler, *Bilder aus dem Osten* (Schumann-Achron) as played by Heifetz, *Romance* (Ambrosio), and *Bavarian Dance No. 2* (Elgar). The next best list, in the opinion of Mr. Sammons, is that of H. J. Bloom: *Air de Lensky* (Tchaikovsky), *Minuet in D major* (Mozart), *L'abeille* (Schubert), *Perpetuum mobile* (Ries), *Les Petits Moulins à Vent* (Couperin-Press), and *I Palpiti* (Paganini); but this must also be disqualified on the same grounds. Jelly d'Aranyi has recorded the Mozart *Minuet in D major* on Vocalion D.02103. It must be observed that ten or more of the above eighteen pieces were not originally written for the violin.

Since these three good lists are out of the running, we hesitate to award the prize, for fear of overlooking something which has eluded our researches in the English catalogues, and the result will therefore be announced in the June number.

In the meanwhile will readers very kindly let us know as soon as possible whether any of the following pieces have been recorded by the violin in any English catalogue?

- (1) *Alman* (anon., arr. Harold Craxton).
- (2) *The Moorings* (Dorothy Howells).

- (3) *The Lone Shore* (J. B. McEwen).
- (4) *The Rope Dancer* (18th cent., arr. A. Moffat).
- (5) *Dragonflies* (Nander Ysalt).
- (6) *Melody* (Prokoviev).
- (7) *Bephir* (Hubay).
- (8) *Reverie* (Vieuxtemps).
- (9) *Sonata in E minor* (Brahms).
- (10) *Dancing Doll* (Poldini).
- (11) *Danse Ancienne* (Dussek, arr. Burmester).
- (12) *Du altor Stefansturm* (Brandl-Kreisler).
- (13) *Adagio and Allegro* from *Sonata 11* (Corelli).
- (14) *Bizarrerie* (Elgar).
- (15) *Air* (Bernhard Molique).
- (16) *Chanson Polonaise* (Wieniawski).
- (17) *Ave Maria* (Cherubini).
- (18) *L'Amico Fritz* (Mascagni).
- (19) *Serenata* (Quinn).

It is to be hoped that recording violinists and Directors of Recording will take note of the titles which our readers offer them; and we propose to publish a further list next month.

B.—Three Pounds' Worth of Records (winner's choice) for the best note in not more than 300 words on *The Lifebelt*.

Enough is already said about the Lifebelt elsewhere in this number. Some of the interesting notes sent in by contributors will be published next month, if space permits. For the present it suffices to announce that the prize is awarded by the Editor to A. E. Bateman, 4, Elmwood Avenue, Feltham, Middlesex, for the following:—

The Lifebelt is good. It made me buy a useful soldering set. When I tried to force the belt on to the swan neck this contraption resolved itself into its component parts by breaking into three pieces. Hence the soldering set.

However, having re-fixed the neck and coaxed the Lifebelt on I proceeded to trial. Orchestras first—basses booming and overwhelming the rest. Then the vocals—all half a tone or more below normal until . . . as a favourite tenor rose passionately into the clouds the motor trembled, listened in a moment, and then resumed its onward rush. Whenever I think of it my blood runs cold.

Turning to St. Wilson I contrived and fixed the counterbalance. Horrors! The basses had gone! The trebles went in splints! The wife waxed sarcastic!

I reduced the counterbalance weight—"Oh the little less, and how much it was."

Now I understood the Editor's enthusiasm. Here was music indeed. Violin's sharp edges vanished, 'cello awakened, piano come to life; trios, quartets, orchestras singing and dancing away! But the orchestra! One after another the orchestral records went under the needle and were healed of their anæmia. No longer did the orchestra lurk coyly in the background. No longer were the climaxes harsh and ungrateful. I went out and bought a complete symphony—my first orchestral records for a year.

(The tenor's all right again!)

The Lifebelt side-tracks the needle noise and enables the reproduced music to assume that *singing* quality which was undoubtedly played into the records. It brings the lower instruments into due prominence, and gives the upper ones a sweeter brilliancy.

National Gramophonic Society Notes

(All communications should be addressed to The Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.)

A Note on ELGAR'S QUINTET for PIANOFORTE & STRINGS in A minor (Op. 84).

(Issued to members of the National Gramophonic Society on five twelve-inch records.)

IN 1918 Elgar completed his first and, so far, only serious chamber music. This consisted of a sonata for violin and pianoforte (Op. 82), a quartet for strings (Op. 83), and the present work. The latter is undoubtedly the culmination of the three. This quintet shows an Elgar whose creative powers had passed through a refining fire. Its seriousness is sometimes sombre and the introspective character of the composer is more pronounced even than hitherto. Containing more iron than most of its predecessors, in many places it gives proof that Elgar's muse is not confined to a limit that is unable to express a truly masculine fibre, as has been asserted. There are, naturally, many passages of extreme loveliness and delicacy of mood, but these appear only to temper the underlying power of the work as a whole. Every page bears the composer's indelible signature with an increased depth of feeling, wealth of romantic colour, and a spirituality that is ennobling. Time may decide whether or not the slow movement is the greatest of its kind that Elgar ever composed. Altogether, this pianoforte quintet is one of the most powerful and significant, yet essentially enigmatic, of Elgar's compositions.

The work was first produced at the Westminster house of the composer's friend, Mr. Leo F. Schuster, on May 3rd, 1919. The first public performance, still from MS. copies, followed on May 21st at Wigmore Hall, London, and was given by a quintet of distinguished British musicians: William Murdoch (pianoforte), Albert Sammons (first violin), W. H. Reed (second violin), Raymond Jeremy (viola), and Felix Salmond (violoncello). It is dedicated to the musical critic, Ernest Newman, and bears the inscription, "Brinkwells, 1918."

1. The first movement may be regarded as the stating of a certain inspiration or even problem that is expounded more fully as the work proceeds, for the three movements are a unified whole. The quintet opens *Moderato* in soft sombre tones. A pleading phrase for strings follows. This important introduction should be well noted. The composer soon leaves its enigmatic mood and establishes a vigorous *Allegro*. The animation of this culminates in a passage marked *Con fuoco*, in which the opening idea of the introduction is prominent. Silence intervenes between this stirring passage and the entry of a quieter section led by a phrase which will also be recognised as belonging to the opening *Moderato*. Soon an episode in a major of charming delicacy of expression leads to the second subject (beginning of record "1st movement. Part 2"), a romantic theme (E major) in thirds and reminiscent of the southern warmth and beauty of the *In the South* overture. The composer dwells on this for some time, according it treatment of great tonal beauty. Later the music becomes clouded and reticent, worked in a pattern of consummate technical skill. The influence of the sombre introduction will be noted. In the recapitulation (beginning of record "1st movement. Part 3") the movement reaches its spiritual ideal. The themes are treated with warm and luxurious colour, romantic feeling and an immense variety of contrast. The movement closes in the sombre tones of the introduction.

2. The *Adagio* is one of the most moving of Elgar's slow movements. Possessing a main theme (announced without preamble) of compelling sincerity and depth of feeling, it has an eloquence of such warmth of expression that the music-lover will hardly need or care for technical detail. This is music and a personality over which we may brood.

3. The *Finale* commences *Andante* with subject-matter taken from the pleading phrase for strings in the *Moderato* opening of the first movement, thus expressing the unity of the quintet as a whole. The *Allegro* itself soon enters *con dignita*. This is of a strong and healthy character, essentially Elgarian in feeling. It is expounded and culminates in a passage marked *Nobilmente* (a favourite indication of the composer), dying away high in the violins. The second subject now enters, its swaying rhythm

presenting a marked contrast to the decisive character of its predecessor, yet actuated by a certain nervous mobility that is peculiar to the composer. The always shifting bass may be noted. After a time a new figure of greater animation enters. This eventually leads to the middle section (record "3rd movement. Part 2"), where the introduction and second subject of the first movement (the latter having a new rhythmic lilt) are recalled amid a general atmosphere of ethereal beauty. The *Allegro* reappears (record "3rd movement. Part 3") in a new and subdued aspect, but strong enough to dispel the warm haze of the foregoing section, and from this point the music gradually grows in strength and brilliance. The essential unity of the whole quintet is now most vividly realised, more from the general impression than the mere presence of familiar themes. The conclusion comes in high light. The nervous theme is prominent in a *Grandioso* aspect, but the influence of the strong *Allegro* has the final utterance.

The writer has drawn on his own monograph, "Sir Edward Elgar" (Kegan Paul & Co.) for certain historical detail. The music is published by Novello & Co., price twenty shillings. No miniature score is available.

JOHN F. PORTE.



Elgar Piano Quintet

Nearly all sets of this have been sent out to members, with a leaflet consisting of Mr. Porte's analytical note printed above. As has been stated before, Mrs. Hobday who played the piano for these records, was chosen by Sir Edward Elgar as being especially suitable for the part. This issue may therefore be taken as an authoritative rendering of the quintet.

Mozart

Instead of the string quintet that was down on the voting list, it has been decided to record Mozart's *Clarinet Quintet*, which was being held over from last year's programme. It is to be played by the Spencer Dyke Quartet and Mr. Draper. We feel sure that no one will regret this arrangement, and there can hardly be any members to whom the issue of this exceedingly beautiful work will not be welcome.

Brahms

The next work due to be issued is the Brahms *Clarinet Quintet*. We are waiting until a short work for the odd (tenth) side has been recorded. For this a movement from a quartet by Glière, a modern Russian composer, has been chosen.

Purcell

We can still give no definite promise as to the date when the Purcell *Fantasies* are to be issued. With them we shall send out the Vaughan Williams *Quintet*, which is a short work; one side of the series will be taken up by *Peat Reek* (McEwen). All these are to be played by the Music Society String Quartet.

Full particulars will be sent to all who are interested in or anxious to become members of the N.G.S. on application to The Secretary, The National Gramophonic Society, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. Telephone: Regent 1383.

TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

Edith Lorand in London

On Thursday next, the 6th, Miss Edith Lorand is giving her first recital at the Aeolian Hall in the evening. Tickets from Lionel Powell and Holt, 161, New Bond Street, and the usual libraries. Although she was over in England for a few days last year, it is odd that Miss Lorand has not extended her European conquests to England before. But, as is so often the case nowadays, she has prepared us for slavery by the propaganda of her Parlophone records; and if she fulfils the expectations that these have roused she will have a thrilling success at the Aeolian Hall and at the At Home which the Hungarian Minister is going to give in her honour. Even those unfortunates who have a wireless but no gramophone will be privileged to hear her.

Imperials

Over and over again we have been able to indicate Imperial records at 2s. each which are able to hold their own with distinction in the company of higher-priced records, and the new complete catalogue (up to March) is well worth close study. Perhaps the band records and the dance records are the most striking features; but the Jewish records of Cantor G. Sirota, to which a correspondent drew attention in March, are the *chef d'œuvre* of the catalogue, closely followed by the operatic tenor solos of Luigi Cilla. The Crystalate Manufacturing Co. are to be warmly congratulated on their work and on the catalogue which they present "with a full sense of our responsibilities to the music-loving public." The public also has its responsibilities to a British firm which offers it the goods at 2s. a record, whether the threatened price-cutting invasion from abroad comes off or not.

Just Wrong

Our readers who are not likely to spell any word wrong themselves—except, of course, "gramophone"—hardly need to be warned that the "Jussrite" cabinets for record-storing, which have often been mentioned in these pages and which are made by Messrs. F. Jackson and Co. at Portsmouth, are not the same as the "Jusrite" cupboards which are sometimes seen in advertisements. The "s" is as important as the "o" in His Master's Voice.

Parlophone Dance Records

By a most regrettable slip in last month's Dance Notes (page 525) our records, Parlo. 5546, 5541, 5549, 5547, were attributed to Columbia. Apologies for all the inconvenience caused are humbly

offered. The friend who pointed out the mistake began his letter: "On looking through your April number I find that by way of putting your foot in it this time you were good enough . . . etc." That's the worst of dancing.

The Mastersingers in Petto

A cellar in Golden Square—like the cupboard of Mr. Jorrocks, "black as 'ell and smells of cheese"; then the rasp of a gramophone needle on a gramophone record, the music of Hans Sachs' Monologue—and suddenly a tiny stage is lit up, as diminutive as if one was sitting in the 5,000th seat of Mr. de Lara's Opera House, and there is the street at Nuremberg and there is Hans Sachs sitting outside his shop and singing with the voice of Robert Radford.

This was at the exhibition of Model Theatres, given by the British Model Theatre Guild at the Faculty of Arts Gallery; and Mr. Leonard Spalding was showing how operas could be presented with the aid of records. It was easy to understand how such a hobby grows upon otherwise well-balanced minds; the scenery, the lighting effects, the puppets, all invite endless ingenuity; and now that we have whole operas on gramophone records there is no obstacle to *Madama Butterfly* complete with suicide in our homes—if we have the spare time.

Swiss Motors

The tenth Swiss Industries Fair has been in full swing at Basle from April 17th to 27th, and the special issue in English of the *Economic Courier*, for a copy of which we are indebted to M. Henri Martin, the Swiss Commercial Attaché in London, has much interesting information, which does not, however, include any details of the export of Swiss gramophone motors to England. Latterly we have been making a far larger proportion of

motors in this country than before the war—one authority says 75 per cent. as against 15 per cent.; but it would be interesting to hear the reports of visitors to Basle on this subject.

Thoughts on Music

"A very popular gift-book, and is certainly an ideal production for a birthday present. We hope Mr. Compton Mackenzie will continue to issue similar publications." So says *The Child* in a review of a column and a half of the "Thoughts on Music," which Mr. Hervey Elwes compiled and THE GRAMOPHONE published. It costs 6s., and is a "delightful and most practical and helpfu"



EDITH LORAND.

publication... arranged so that a musical accompaniment is provided for each day of the year." Buy a copy and give it away after looking through it. Then buy another copy.

The Right Spirit

Last month we asked for the correct address of one of our readers whose letter had been published in the previous number. Several readers had asked for it in order to send him spare records. He now writes to supply the information, and adds: "I have already had a parcel of records from a Mr. M—, whilst another gentleman from North London has also been good enough to write and say he will help me. Sir, such generosity is splendid, and I feel very deeply moved. I always knew THE GRAMOPHONE and its readers were apart from the ordinary run of journalism. It had a different atmosphere from the ordinary "hobby" paper. Now I think of the paper as an imaginary club or meeting-place where gramophiles air their views and experiences without fear or favour. I fear I have been somewhat vague, but I have done my best to explain how grateful I feel to THE GRAMOPHONE and all connected with it."

The Portable Clifftophone

Those who wanted to buy the new five-guinea Clifftophone portable and succeeded in obtaining one are lucky. Since one was not sent to the London Office for the Expert Committee, a member of the staff was sent to investigate. He found one in the Clifftophone rooms at Messrs. Chappell's in Bond Street—but only one; and three or four pathetic parties all wanting to hear it at the same time. It was the usual story: "We can't cope with the orders; a thousand a week promised by the factory." "Excuse me, Miss, can I borrow the portable to demonstrate to—." "No, I'm afraid not—I'm showing it to this gentleman—." "Oh well, when you've finished, please—." And the gentleman had to be content with a cursory inspection, noticing three great points—that this portable plays with the lid closed, that it has a fashionable hobble tone-arm, and that it carries nine twelve-inch records. It weighs 14 lb. (without the records) and its volume is immense. It has to be heard to be believed.

Bradford's Chamber Music Festival

Musical enthusiasts at Bradford have observed that there is a vacancy for a centre of chamber music in England, and the projected two-day festival at the Queen's Hall, Bradford, on October 5th and 6th, may well become the first trial flight in a series of enterprises which will make Bradford famous all over the world for its chamber music. The preliminary report which we have received from the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Keith Douglas, of Farfield Hall, Addingham, Ilkley, is sensibly drafted to inspire confidence as well as excitement; and among the many fine works in the suggested programme we notice the Debussy *Quartet*, the Schönberg *Sextet*, the Mozart *Oboe Quartet*, the Beethoven *First Rasoumovsky*, and the Brahms' *Clarinet Quintet*, all of which may be studied in preparation by those who are members of the National Gramophonic Society. We shall expect many recruits for the N.G.S. from Bradford.

A Collector's Piece

How many people secured a copy of the miniature Vocalion record of *She showed him this, she showed him that*, which was given away during Selfridge's seventeenth birthday week to everyone who made a purchase in the gramophone department? It was played by Don Parker and his Band (who were to be heard in the Palm Court on the Wednesday afternoon as an interlude in their activities at the Piccadilly Hotel and the Kit-Cat Club), and in its special envelope made a pleasant souvenir of the occasion. But perhaps an even more appropriate tune would have been *When you and I were seventeen*.

Linguaphone

As an experiment we are asking one of our contributors, who has at present only a most trifling knowledge of German, to undertake the Linguaphone course conscientiously and to report to us exactly how it works out. Obviously, this is the information which the public wants, and we are glad to say that the Linguaphone Institute has welcomed the idea.

The Waveola

There is nothing new about the Waveola. It was described in these pages as long ago as October, 1923, and has always been

recognised as remarkably successful as an amplifier design. The recent revival of the long amplifier has brought it into prominence, and its peculiarity—the deliberate angularity, as contrasted with the usual curves—is worthy of detailed examination. Besides its popularity as a loud-speaker for wireless and as an amplifier in portables and larger machines, the Waveola is now to be seen in a baby form, naked, neat and light, ready to be fixed on to the top of any gramophone and to work much in the same way as the Academy Amplifier. But it only costs a guinea and can be used with nothing but a motor, a turn-table and a sound-box, or, alternatively, can act as a supporter and reinforcement for the amplifier or horn of any make of gramophone. The sales should be enormous.

The Mikiphone

But the sales of any new thing are enormous. And the newest of all is the Mikiphone. It came to the London office in a parcel the size of a Camembert cheese. It created rather a stir and everybody wanted to prove that it would go into his pocket. It certainly did, though it is rather heavier than a tobacco-pouch. Then there was the excitement of unpacking and assembling it. This was the easiest thing imaginable. The Mikiphone is not only the smallest gramophone ever, but it is as ingeniously constructed as if it had been Chinese. It plays only ten-inch records, but it manages them with complete self-possession and competency. Messrs. Keith Prowse and Co. have now given us the V.P.K. of the gramophone world. But when are we to get the corresponding films of records—the waistcoat pocket symphonies of which the pundits talk?

Fairy Gold

The Editor's novel, *Fairy Gold*, which was serialised recently in the *Evening Standard*, is now published in book form by Messrs. Cassell without cuts. There is no need to tell readers of THE GRAMOPHONE what a difference the changing of records and the cuts made. But now that the whole novel is readable intact and at a sitting—a very long sitting—justice can be done to the unfolding of what will rank as one of the best romances that he has ever written, and it is not without significance that every word of it was written at Jethou to the sound of the gramophone.

Flonzaley

The Wigmore Hall was almost, but not quite, full for the Flonzaley Quartet's only recital—on April 17th. They (Messrs. Adolfo Betti, Alfred Pochon, Nicolas Modavan, and Ivan d'Archembeau) played the Mozart *Quartet in C major* (K.465) so superbly that one could not help regretting that the complete gramophone version is by the Lener, not the Flonzaley, Quartet. Mr. Francis Terry (p. 314) compared the music to a Raffael. The Beethoven *Quartet in F major*, Op. 135, which followed, was like a Michel Angelo, so powerful and splendid in texture that the mellifluous Schumann *Quartet in A minor*, Op. 41, No. 1, was almost a monotonous amenity afterwards. But it was an afternoon never to be forgotten by any of the audience.

Astonishing

It is still the common talk that gramophone records are a useful substitute for the real thing; or again that wireless is damaging the concert halls because people won't go to concerts if they can get a tolerable substitute in their armchairs. But when will someone stand up and say loudly "Gramophone records are better than the real thing. They are crystallised performances: the diction is better; the personality is retained and the person eliminated. The dross is away, the gold is preserved"? When will someone shout "That great hall at Bristol was packed for the third time in living memory the other night; three thousand and more people went there to listen to gramophone records. What living singer or orchestra can fill that hall? All honour to the gramophone and to the Gramophone Company and to Mr. H. L. Rink, the lecturer."

"But the scratch, the bore of changing records ——" O God! O Montreal!

The Forum

The voting for prizes for articles that have appeared in The Forum of the February, March and May numbers is now due. It will be a great help if every reader will make an effort to record his or her vote on a postcard. It may be a bore, but it is almost a duty to fellow-readers and contributors. See page 562.

THE FORUM

The following articles are unsolicited contributions from readers, dealing with this or that aspect of the gramophone to which each has given thought. A selection from the MSS. received is published every month, and prizes are offered every quarter. Articles should not exceed 1,500 words, and should be typewritten or written very legibly on one side only of the paper. They should be sent to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1., marked "The Forum": and a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed.

This month completes another quarter since The Forum was started, and readers are now asked to register their votes by stating on a postcard the three articles in The Forum of the February, March and May numbers of "The Gramophone" which they consider worthy of awards, in the order of preference. Postcards should be marked "Forum," and should be sent to the above address, to reach the office before May 12th.

The First Prize will be Five Pounds, the second Three Pounds, the third Two Pounds. Records of the value of One Pound will be sent to the reader who gets the winning list; or, if many readers coincide in their preferences, the Editor's discretion in awarding them must be accepted.



SOME NOTES ON PUCCINI'S "LA BOHÈME"

By PHILIP MARCHANT

THE score I have used is published by G. Ricordi and Co., 265, Regent Street, London; English and Italian text. The following are some notes on the records with some information, etc., that may be of use to readers interested in the records of this fine opera. I shall not take up space in describing the action taking place, but I would advise all gramophone enthusiasts to refer to the 1925 "Opera at Home."

Che gelida manina (Your tiny hand is frozen). Page 64 of score, sung by Caruso.—This is recognised as the finest record of this famous piece. Most tenors have tried it at some period of their gramophonic existence. The next best is by McCormack (H.M.V., D.B.340). For some unknown reason this is cut out of the "Opera at Home," but appears on the catalogue. Hackett does it on Columbia 7366. For those who admire opera in English D.B.451 will suit them down to the ground; a splendid rendering by Evan Williams.

Sì, mi chiamano Mimi (I am called Mimi). Page 70 of score.—Melba's is the finest record I have heard, D.B.356. Bori, D.B.152, and Alda, 155, are also excellent. Rosina Buckman on Columbia sings this in English and coupled with it is a fine rendering of the air above, by Maurice D'Oisly. This fine record is cut out of the Columbia 1925 list unfortunately.

O, soave fanciulla (Lovely maid in the moonlight). H.M.V., 054129, Caruso and Melba.—The gem of the opera. I doubt if there is a better balanced or finer recorded duet in the whole catalogue. No one should be without this although it is expensive. Played with fibres it will last indefinitely if taken care of. Again, there is a cheaper record of this well sung in English by Frank Mullings and Elsa Stralia on Col. 7335. The beginning of this duet is on page 79 in the score.

ACT II.

Quando me'n vo' soletta per la via (Musetta's song), H.M.V., D.A.277, by Alma Gluck, is excellent. I have a single side disc of this by Destournel on Vocalion; this I see is among the missing in their 1925 catalogue. I do not think this is recorded in English. Page 139 of score.

ACT III.

Mimi! è ver, siam qui da un mese. Page 189 of score.

H.M.V., D.K.111, Farrar and Scotti.—A superb record, although evidently made some years ago. On page 204 of the score there is a short solo for Rudolfo, commencing *Ebbene, no, non lo son*, a dramatic outburst something similar to *Vesti la giubba* in *Pagliacci*. This can be obtained on Parlophone. The other side of this disc is a fine solo from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *O Lola bianca*. This is sung by a tenor new to me, named Costa Milona (E.10913).

Addio (Good-bye). Page 214 of score. H.M.V., D.B.356, Melba.—This is a beautiful number. Melba sings this perfectly and there is no more to be said about it.

Addio, dolce svegliare (Good-bye to sweet awakenings). H.M.V., D.O.101, Caruso, Farrar, Scotti, and Viafora.—Another gem, an expensive gem for me. This record is £1 in New Zealand, but it is not issued by any other company. Page 217 of score.

ACT IV.

O Mimi, tu più non torni (Ah, Mimi, you will never come back). H.M.V., D.M.105, Caruso and Scotti; H.M.V., D.B.360, McCormack and Sammarco; Col. L.1357, Thorpe Bates and Hughes Macklin (in English); Vocalion J.04105, Lenghi-Cellini and George Baker (in Italian).—The Caruso-Scotti rendering, while the most expensive, is the best of the bunch. The Columbia is very fine, also for those who want it in English. Page 236 of score.

Vecchia zimarra (Song of the coat). Col. A.1214, sung by Seguro, a bass of the first rank.—No other bass can touch this fine singer in this pathetic little song of farewell; most of the others are slightly inclined to make it "sloppy," although Virgilio Lazzari sings it very well on Vocalion B.3103. Page 266 of score.

This, I think, closes my too short choice of records from this beautiful opera. There are cases, I know, where I have not given a place to some recording, but it is because that particular item is unprocurable in this part of the world; there are no towns nearer the South Pole than Invercargill, New Zealand. Still I hope that the ones I have included will please anyone who may buy some of them. The rule is to try over as many of the same piece by different artists as possible and choose the one that satisfies you most. But above all, get a score, and your enjoyment will be increased tenfold.

PHILIP MARCHANT.

CONSTANCE WILLIS—"THE GRAMOPHONE"— AND VOCALION

An Appreciation

By V. W. RUSSELL FORBES

IN February, 1925, the Editor turned a letter of mine into a leaderette and emphasised a humble request that we might be favoured with a record by Constance Willis of the *Gavotte* from *Mignon*, *Here in beauty's home am I*.

Vocalion, with commendable energy, promptly obliged, and turned out a record which many readers will be glad to have in their collection. Owing to the unfortunate omission of their list from the Vocalion advertisement in the May GRAMOPHONE we missed this record and overlooked K. K.'s criticism, wherein he damns it with faint, very faint, praise. The tune is one of the jolliest and most catchy ever written, and if K. K. had ever tried to sing the song, so that his words were intelligible to his hearers, he would realise what Constance Willis has achieved. Anyone who has heard

her—no longer playing Frederick, but Mignon herself—holding a vast audience at Covent Garden spell-bound, whilst from her lips floated the magic notes of *Knowest thou that fair land*, must have realised that here was an artist of exceptional merit. And her records bear this out. Both in *Hugh the Drover* (H.M.V.) and on Vocalion she comes out remarkably well and with almost total absence of the English hoot. This is the opinion expressed to-day by musical people at a gramophone society meeting where criticism is always keen.

I feel I have said *parvum in multo*, but I had to voice the thanks of the buying public to THE GRAMOPHONE, the Vocalion, and the artist herself, for having been given a *good* record by an English artist, in English, that was really wanted.



RECORDED MUSIC OF DEBUSSY

[This list was compiled by Mr. Fisher, of Chicago, and Dr. Britzius, of Minneapolis. The abbreviations used are as follows: F.G., the French catalogue of the Gramophone Co.; F.P., French Pathé; V., Victor Talking Machine Co.; N.G.S., National Gramophonic Society; H.M.V., The Gramophone Co.; Col., Columbia Graphophone Co.; Voc., Vocalion Co.; V.F., Velvet Face.]

L'Après-midi d'un Faune: Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, H.M.V., D.130; Orchestre Symphonique du Gramophone, F.G., W.317; Paris Symphony Orchestra, F.G. (withdrawn); Concerts Lamoureux, F.P., 6594; Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, V., 6481; Aeolian Orchestra, Voc., D.02126; Mark Hambourg (piano, arr. Leonard Borwick), H.M.V., E.362.

Beau soir: de Luca, V., 902.

Children's Corner:—

1. *Dr. Gradus ad Parnassum*: Cortot, H.M.V., D.B.678; Rachmaninoff, V., 813; H.M.V., D.A.369; Concerts Touche, F.G., W.373.
2. *Jumbo's Lullaby*: Cortot, H.M.V., D.B.678.
3. *Serenade for the Doll*: Cortot, H.M.V., D.B.678; Concerts Touche, F.G., W.373.
4. *Snow is dancing*: Cortot, H.M.V., D.B.678.
5. *Little Shepherd*: Cortot, H.M.V., D.B.679; Concerts Touche, F.G., P.380.
6. *Golliwog's Cake-walk*: Cortot, H.M.V., D.B.679; Rachmaninoff, V.813; H.M.V. D.A.369; Concerts Touche, F.G., P.380; Murdoch, Col., L.1347; Marie Novello, V.F., 1037; Ethel Attwood, Beltona, 6032.

Clair de Lune: Moiseivitch, H.M.V., D.59; Marie Novello, V.F., 1037; Godowsky, Bruns., 50069.

Danse: Hambourg, H.M.V. (withdrawn).

Deux Arabesques:—

1. *E major*: Murdoch, Col., D.1506; Aeolian Quintet, Voc., K.05124; J. Schendel, V., 18179; Sassoli (harp), V., 45243.
2. *G. major*: Murdoch, Col., D.1452; Bowen, Voc., K.05146 & K.05214; Pouishnoff, Col., D.1510; Scharrer, H.M.V., D.576; Aeolian Quintet, Voc., K.05124; Tyrer, V.F., 544.

L'Enfant Prodigue:—

O Day that ne'er may come again: Coltham, H.M.V., C.1130.
What joyous airs: Coltham, H.M.V., C.1130.
Cortège et air de danse: Concerts Touche, F.G., W.356.
The years roll by: Enid Cruickshank, Voc. K.05221.
Jardins sous la pluie: Moiseivitch, H.M.V., D.59; York Bowen, Voc., K.05136.

Mandoline: Nordica, Col. 74027; Melba, H.M.V., D.B. 709.
Noël des enfants: Edvina, H.M.V., D.B.547.

Nocturnes, Three:—

2. *Fêtes*: Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, H.M.V., D.1000.
Nuit d'étoiles: Culp, with Debussy, H.M.V., D.A.155.
Petite burger (flute): Gaubert, F.G., W.380.

Petite Suite:—

1. *En bateau*: Beecham's Symphony Orchestra, Col., L.1248; Symphony Orch. of Amer., Amer. Col. A. 6097; Thibaud, H.M.V., D.A.620; Double Quintet, F.G., W.311.
2. *Cortège*: Aeolian Orchestra, Voc., D.02120; Double Quintet, F.G., W.311.
3. *Menuet*: Aeolian Orchestra, Voc., D.02120; Double Quintet, F.G., W.312.
4. *Ballet*: Double Quintet, F.G., W.312; Beecham's Symphony Orchestra, Col., L.1248.

Plus que lente, Valse: Hambourg, H.M.V. (withdrawn).

Poissons d'Or: Scharrer, H.M.V., D.914.

Preludes (First Book):—

5. *Les Collines d'Anacapri*: Murdoch, Col., 1535.
8. *Fille aux cheveux de lin*: Cortot, H.M.V., D.A.146; V., 562.
10. *La Cathédrale engloutie*: Cortot, H.M.V., D.B.679; Murdoch, Col. L.1220.
12. *Menestrels*: Cortot, H.M.V., D.A.146; V., 562.

(Second Book):—

5. *Bruyères*, Murdoch, Col. 1535.
 12. *Feux d'Artifice*: Elly Ney, Brunswick.
- Romance*: Gauthier, V., 69669; Melba, H.M.V., D.B. 709.

Quartet in G minor:—

- Complete: Spencer Dyke Quartet, N.G.S.; Virtuoso String Quartet, H.M.V., D.1058—D.1061.
3. *Andante*: Catterall Quartet, H.M.V., D.651; London String Quartet, Col., L.1004.
- Reflets dans l'eau*: Scharrer, H.M.V., D.914; Godowsky, Bruns., 50069.

WHY WE ARE MUSICAL

By "INDICATOR"

THERE was a Mephistofelian cynic who did not argue with his fellows—he explained them. It is largely this explanatory power that accounts for the general shying at phrenology. Dr. Bernard Hollander must have had many a chuckle at this characteristic reason for the taboo amongst his fellow surgeons; humbly I often share the chuckle in regard to my fellow gramophonists. Yet why shy at so interesting an explanation of "Why we are musical?" And the corollary is surely fascinating "Why some are not musical," and the further explanation of "Types of musical character in Appreciation, Composition and Execution."

There is nothing abstruse in the elementary method of approximately gauging the indications in, at any rate, pronounced cases; certainly no difficulty in abnormally developed persons. Just consider the simple *modus operandi* in this particular diagnosis. In your mind's eye draw a line across the forehead, midway between eyebrows and where the hair commences (if any), a full length along that line indicates that Time and Tune organs are accordingly well developed, for those organs are situated nearly on the ends of that line round the corners of the temples (A little allowance should be made in the case of excessively developed jaw muscles, which are attached just underneath.)

The presentation plates come in handy for observation. Look at Donizetti's wide forehead, and incidentally notice the lowness of his side-head (lack of Hope, Ideality, Sublimity, Wonder) that caused fits of melancholia and finally insanity.

Compare with a photo of Wagner's immensely high head (with abnormally great Sublimity, etc.), then compare their compositions—forced gaiety, tunefulness, etc. on a low plane, versus sublime realms of mystic immensity. I leave this line with you for interesting comparative pursuit.

Then the mechanical gramophonist: his head shows more development beyond the ends of line previously mentioned, that is after Time and Tune (which may be only slightly developed), towards over the ears where the executive organ of Constructiveness is situated. This often goes with more executive musical ability. Conversely, note the person, where after a full development of Time and Tune the skull falls away inwards over the ears, here you have only Appreciation of music without executive ability or mechanical interest. Again, you will be able to note the narrow foreheads, to whom music is an uninteresting noise, and save yourselves inviting them to hear it.

Of course, most of us have "normal noddles," and reach only degrees of mediocrity; such are necessarily more difficult to diagnose, but as I have said before, we are safer company than the abnormal geniuses, who, by reason of overbalance, are not an unmixed blessing.

There are forty-one organs in phrenology, each with its own memory and correlating influences; you may have thirty-nine developed, yet, not having Time and Tune, you can not be "us," which is mutually satisfactory.



TWO LIBRARIES: BOOKS—RECORDS

By "SCRUTATOR"

IT would seem to be almost incredible that a book-lover could fail to be at the same time a music-lover, though until recent years the book-lover has had the advantage of being able to minister to his desires by means of a public library, or his own private collection of favourites (which in these days of cheap editions can be had for a modest outlay), while the music-lover has had to rely largely on concerts, at which he is usually regaled with so many and varied items that his musical digestion is often completely deranged.

But the gramophone has changed all that; the cosy armchair and warm fire are no longer the prerogative of the book-lover. The music-lover also can now have his library of well-thumbed volumes of records, from which according to his mood or inclination he can select at his leisure and enjoy those excerpts which he desires, without suffering from the surfeit which the concert, or even the wireless, usually provide him.

A writer for one of the early issues of THE GRAMOPHONE expressed astonishment that anyone could be found listening to a gramophone alone. Why, I wonder? Surely a beautiful passage of music, played by a master hand, can be enjoyed in quietness and alone, just as the quiet reading of a literary masterpiece is a far different and more exquisite enjoyment, with its attendant moments of meditation than is, say, a public lecture by the famous author of the said masterpiece. The first is sheer joy; the second interesting, exciting, or thrilling—no more!

Possessing myself a very modest and quite unassuming library of both books and records, I have been impressed with the similarity of my dual tastes; and be it at once stated, I do not wed myself to any specific kind of literature or music, but

possess that "versatile mediocrity" which "Indicator" pleaded for some months ago, and for which I offer no apologies and express no contrition of heart.

My book library has, of course, its classics—Thackeray, Dickens, Ruskin, Marcus Aurelius, etc.—into whose treasures I dip from time to time. These are balanced in my musical library by Handel, Mozart, Bach, and others, all belonging to that order of things which, far from tiring or growing stale, increase in beauty with the using.

But I do not live entirely in the dizzy heights of the classics; I have a great liking for the sugary sweetness of Jeffrey Farnol, and balance my musical account with De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra and the Edith Lorand Orchestra, whose syrupy concoctions often soothe my jaded feelings.

A very important section of my book library is devoted to books of travel in all parts of the world, illustrated by actual photographs preferably taken by the finest camera artists, as, being possessed only of small means, I have to take my travels in other countries in this way. Here again I find a parallel in my record library, having many national folk-tunes composed by those who made a study of such, and I often take musical travels with Brahms in Hungary, Granados in Spain, Dvorák in America, Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakoff in Russia, Järnefeldt in Finland, and Grieg in Norway, quite an imposing array of guides, I can assure anyone who has a passion for travelling. To fall from the sublime to the ridiculous, even Ketelbey's rather comic *Persian Markets* and *Chinese Temple Gardens* claim my wayward attention on occasion, though his musical photographs do not impress me as being taken on the spot, but are rather reminiscent of those weird pictures in the illustrated weeklies usually described as

"drawn from material supplied by eye-witnesses," but which often denote more of the artist's imagination than anything the eye-witnesses saw.

Alas! I have to regret that the most important section of my travel books finds no counterpart among my records. I am absolutely thrilled by "Antarctica," and possess almost every book written on that wonderful continent, but no composer has ever given the subject his attention. (I am taking out the patent and shall expect a royalty and wayleaves from anyone who gets on with the job.) What an epic symphony could be written around the tremendous struggles, failures, and triumphs of those heroic bands of men who have, against fearful odds (even to the death of such great and gallant men as Scott, Shackleton, Wilson, and the unconquerable Oates, who walked out of his tent into a blizzard in a hopeless attempt to save his comrades) conquered the austral pole! I fancy Gustav Holst could do something with this theme if he tried it, and would treat the subject sublimely.

I have in addition a great liking for historical fiction—Scott, Stanley Weyman, Rafael Sabatini, and Harrison Ainsworth—and here again folk-tunes of long ago supply my musical taste in this direction, the English Singers and the folk tune suites of Gustav Holst and Vaughan Williams possessing quite an

Ainsworthian flavour, though no one seems to have hit off in music Sabatini's lurid pictures of the famous Borgia.

Two other sections of my library, poetry, and books on works of art (by which I mean painting) are also well balanced by records which stress the art and poetry of music rather than any other side, but as this involves an ethical problem affecting literature, music and art too great for inclusion in this article, I content myself with simply mentioning the fact without illustration.

I must finally confess that although I am getting a little thin on top, I can still enjoy a good school tale, or humorous work, and my book library contains its Wodehouse, Warren-Bell, Mark Twain, and in both categories (whisper it softly!) Compton Mackenzie, while I balance this section from my music library by marches, waltz tunes (for the lilt and rhythm—I do not dance), ballads in short measure, and Gilbert and Sullivan.

But it is an interesting study, this similarity of books and records, of literature and music, on which I have very briefly touched. Perhaps in a year or two, when Mr. George Blake's record albums are as well thumbed as, I doubt not, his books are, he will be able to tell us more about it.

"SCRUTATOR."



AN APPRECIATION

By H. L. WILSON

GUSTAV HOLST'S *St. Paul's Suite* is a new expression of beauty, or rather the expression of an old thought in a new way. In these days of realism this little example of absolute music is like a refreshing downpour of rain, and each time I hear it I become more enthusiastic over its greenness. For it is green, of the country; redolent of the atmosphere of the English countryside; naively reminiscent of lads and lasses gaily dancing. The *Finale* is traditional in appearance, like the maypole. It conjures up a picture of a perfect summer's day. There, in the sunlight, is the stretch of verdant sward; the coloured streamers fly, the merry crowd tramps right noisily to the accompaniment of a lusty, irresistible melody. Mr. Holst has not done a very wonderful thing, but certainly a clever one, and he has offered nothing more charming in style. He has written, as he loves to do, a tune, or rather a series of tunes; and when a tiny streak of modernism shows itself, as it does in one or two places—notably in the reiterated chords at the end of the jig (similar to a passage in *Mars* from *The Planets*)—it serves but to add piquancy to an already savourous conception. The whole composition smacks of spontaneity. It is a perfect little masterpiece of which we have but few. For although there are many suites for string and small orchestras, most of them based on folk melodies and conventionally treated, not one

seems so inspired, none so sparkling with good humour, none in which the hand of the experienced musician is so apparent, as in this work of Holst's. But, because it is a suite for string orchestra; because, in consequence, it is something of a trifle; because it is the work of an English composer; because it is not by Haydn or Mozart, it stands in grave danger of being carefully and utterly forgotten. And a jewel of this kind deserves a better fate. Let us show that, so far as the gramophone is concerned, at least, we are not merely lovers of tradition or fine names, but able to recognise pure music, come whence it may.

I find that having delightfully described the suite as a piece of absolute music, I immediately fall into the error of describing the sensations it produces upon me. If an explanation is needed, I must content myself by saying that the suggestion of a programme must not be taken too literally. After all is said and done, music of the absolute type is more often than not responsible for a more or less definite series of associations in one's own mind.

(Columbia 12in. double-sided records, Nos. L.1648, L.1649; Gustav Holst and Symphony Orchestra: *St. Paul's Suite* occupies three sides, and the remaining side is devoted to *Country Song*, No. 1 of the *Songs without Words*.)

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Gramophone Societies' Reports

[Owing to the increasing number of societies, it is unfortunately necessary to ration reporting secretaries down to 200 words a month. Reports must reach the London Office before the fifteenth of the month for inclusion in the next number. Items from programmes must be incorporated in the report; programmes separately attached cannot be printed.]

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Will you kindly allow me to appeal, through your columns, to gramophonists in Birmingham and district who do not belong to any similar organisation, to join me in forming a society there. The objects would include the hearing and criticising of new recordings (possibly with a view to helping the recording firms by such criticism), and collection and exchange of all technical information; and perhaps the forming of a library of records. The monthly reports of societies in your paper indicate what should be the aims of a similar club for the City of Birmingham. If I receive enough names I will undertake to call a first meeting to elect officers and committee, and to lay down the lines of future work.

Hadenholme, Old Hill, Staffs.

ALFRED H. BASSANO.

AGRICOLA GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—Mr. F. H. Lancum and Mr. P. W. Hosking were responsible for the main portion of the evening at the society's April meeting, and well-balanced and interesting programmes were presented. Items of particular interest in Mr. Lancum's programme were Dittersdorf's *Andante in G major* (Elman String Quartet), Kahn's *Ave Maria* (Caruso and Elman), and Myddleton's *Phantom Brigade* (H.M. Welsh Guards Band), an excellent 2s. 6d. Regal record. *Dinah Lee*, as sung by the Revellers, caused much amusement. Mr. Hosking gave us, amongst others, *King Neptune* from German's *Merrie England* (George Baker), Bishop's *Echo Song* (Galli-Curci), and Jarnefeldt's dainty *Praeludium*, played by the Grenadier Guards Band.

The new issues, which completed the programme, were demonstrated with a K. G. C. Diaphonic sound-box, kindly lent by the inventor, Mr. K. G. Clark, of Buckhurst Hill. This box proved to be less "tubby" than some large diaphragm boxes, whilst its application to electrical recordings was eminently satisfactory, the reproduction of the *Overture to the Flying Dutchman* and Moisevitich's record of the Chopin *Scherzo*, Op. 31, being particularly fine.

We are indebted to the Parlophone and Vocalion Companies for further additions to the Society's Library. The excellence of the orchestral recording in the Parlophone version of R. Strauss' *Macbeth* is worthy of special mention, whilst Marek Weber in further J. Strauss waltzes proved as tuneful as ever. From the Vocalion April records there should be noted the Handel *Sonata for two violins and piano*, admirably recorded, and an excellent rendering by Roy Henderson of Wallace's *Freebooter Songs*.—EDWARD U. BROCKWAY, *Hon. Secretary*.

THE BIRMINGHAM GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The March meetings of the Birmingham Gramophone Society were held on Tuesdays, March 16th and March 30th, at the Ebenezer Chapel Board Room, Steelhouse Lane.

The former meeting consisted of a specially arranged programme of classical records followed by a complete performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's opera, *The Pirates of Penzance*. The classical programme was highly appreciated, and among the items chiefly enjoyed were: Emmy Bettendorf in *Senta's Ballade*, Kreisler in *Caprice Viennois*, New Queen's Orchestra in *Wood Nymphs' Valse*, Stracciari in *Largo al Factotum*, and Tudor Davies in *Prize Song* from *The Mastersingers*. The Sullivan Opera was enjoyed throughout.

On the second meeting, on March 30th, members were regaled by a demonstration of the March records kindly sent us by the Vocalion, Parlophone, and Homochord companies. Among the Vocalion numbers our members picked out: Albert Sammons in his own *Canzonetta*, Olga Haley in the French *Jardin d'Amour*, John Coates in *Come into the garden*, Maud, Horace Stevens in *The Vagabond*, and the duet records of Destournel with Hardy Williamson and Frank Titterton. The first records of Victor

Carne seemed to delight our members, and makes one feel that here is a voice which is going to prove a "record seller." The favourite record of the Parlophone issues was Raff's *Cavatina*, played by Tossy Spiwakowsky, and the next most popular item was a Strauss valse played by Marek Weber's Orchestra. Several members were very keen on the Beethoven *Spring Sonata*, in six parts, and, in fact, the whole Parlophone batch were voted a wonderful provision for the real music lover, with the exception of Robert Burg's Wagner record, which was the only Parlophone record not meeting with full approval. Once more we thank the Parlophone Company for their exceeding kindness. The Homochord records proved wonderful value, and the favourite items were: *Kalakua*, by Fesca's Orchestra, and a piano foxtrot record of *Tea for two* backed by the *Toy Drum Major*. Messrs. Pathé have kindly sent us a batch of Pathé and Actuelle records which arrived too late, but will be included in our April meetings.

Any persons desirous of joining will be gladly supplied with any information required.—CHARLES SUMMERFIELD, *Secretary*.

BLACKBURN AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.

In response to a letter published in the local press, over thirty people met at Messrs. Carlisle's Music Rooms, Darwen Street, Blackburn, to discuss the formation of a local gramophone society. Dr. Norman M. Greeves occupied the chair, supported by Mr. T. C. Egan and Mr. Frank Critchley.

After the chairman and Mr. Egan had outlined the objects and the advantages to be obtained by having such an organisation in their midst, it was unanimously resolved that a gramophone society should be formed immediately. Dr. N. M. Greeves was thereupon elected president, Mr. Frank Critchley vice-president and treasurer, Mr. T. C. Egan hon. secretary, supported by a committee comprising Dr. Roe, Messrs. H. Wilkinson, W. Hesmondhalgh, J. J. Whiteside, and R. Gollop. Altogether thirty-four names were entered upon the membership roll, and a great number of enquiries have been received.

Meetings are to be held fortnightly on Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., beginning on April 20th, when there will be a competition for the two best records—one vocal and the other instrumental. Two records have been offered as prizes by the president and vice-president.

After the business incidental to the formation of the society had been concluded, the members gave an appreciative hearing to a number of new recordings, lent, together with a new H.M.V. machine, by Mr. J. Carlisle, who has also kindly placed one of his rooms at the disposal of the society.

An additional meeting was held on April 13th, when the president gave a recital which included *Symphony in F minor*, No. 4 (Tchaikovsky) and *Sonata in B flat*, No. 3 (Mozart).

The secretary will be glad to give any further particulars to enquiries addressed to 45, Oozehead Lane, Blackburn.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.

A particularly fine demonstration was given by the president of the society, Mr. H. Watson, on Wednesday, March 24th, in the Mechanics' Institute. The chair was occupied by Mr. H. Mawson, the vice-president, and demonstrator had the able assistance of his wife during the recital. Among the most appreciated of the records were: *Si vous l'aviez compris*, sung by Caruso; *La Villanelle*, Galli-Curci; a pianoforte solo by Backhaus, *Liebestraum*; a cornet solo, *Softly awakes my heart*, by Sergeant Leggett, of the Scots Guards; a song, *Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali*, by Beniamino Gigli (tenor); *A Vucchella*, by Caruso; Handel's *Largo* on the organ; and *Tombe degl'avi miei*, also by Beniamino Gigli. Among the records of lighter music were some *Gems from Rose Marie*, sung by the Light Opera Company. A humorous duet, by the Happiness Boys, of *I miss my Swiss*, *Round the World Medley*, by the Savoy Orpheans, and a jolly song called *Up among the heather*, by Will Fyffe, the comedian. At the conclusion of the programme a hearty vote of thanks was extended to Mr. Watson and to Mrs. Watson for her assistance.

The committee tenders its sincere thanks to the Vocalion Gramophone Company and the Parlophone Company, Ltd., for the very choice selection of records for inclusion in the society's library, which have been much appreciated by the members.—H. GOLDSMITH, *Hon. Secretary*, 18, Salt Street, Manningham, Bradford.

CARDIFF AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The meeting held on April 1st took the form of a "Chamber Music" evening, which was given by Mr. Trevor Price. Unfortunately the attendance was not what one might expect for so fine a subject, which was handled with rare skill by the speaker. After a brief explanation of the term "Chamber Music" and dealing with its development, a most enjoyable programme was presented. The items were varied rather than placed chronologically. Outstanding among these were: *Elizabethan Love Songs* (Campion and Dowland), by Sarah Fischer; Madrigal, *On the plains* (Weelkes), by English Singers; *Presto from Sonata in A* (Bach), by William Primrose; *Quartet in G, Op. 76, No. 1* (Haydn), by the Budapest String Quartet; *Quartet in E flat* (first movement) (Beethoven), by the Lener Quartet; *Virgin's Lullaby from Bethlehem* (Rutland Boughton), by Elsie Suddaby. The programme was much appreciated by all, and we feel extremely grateful to Mr. Price for so pleasant an evening.

We have to acknowledge the continued kindness of the Vocalion Co. for further parcels of records. A recital of these records, together with those received from the Parlophone and Duophone Companies.—EVAN G. JONES, *Secretary*.

DEWSBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—Owing to the success of the previous competition night a second was held by the society on March 9th. Out of 30 entries the prize was carried off by Mrs. K. Walker, whose record, Dunkler's *Réverie* (Col. 1233) received the most votes.

A Columbia evening took place on March 23rd, with records and machine kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. Sykes.

On April 13th members spent an evening with the "Great Masters." The programme was culled from the collections of Mr. H. Prichard and Mr. S. Brasher as being most representative of the composers chosen. Handel was represented by a chorus from *The Messiah*, after two songs by Purcell had been given, to show how Handel, who was only ten years old when Purcell died, was largely influenced by the great English composer. Variety was added to the programme by the inclusion of a movement of Haydn's *Toy Symphony*. To Beethoven was allotted three items, as was also Sullivan, whose rarely heard *Henry VIII Dances* were played. Other items included a Bach *Organ Fugue*, a Mozart *Violin Sonata*, two songs by Schubert, and extracts from operas of Wagner and Verdi. Holst brought the evening to a close with his *Suite in F for Military Band*.—R. D. KEIGHLEY, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

THE DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—Mr. Conmee contributed a most entertaining hour's demonstration at the March meeting. His programme consisted of the complete recording of Tchaikovsky's *Fourth Symphony* (H.M.V.) and Beethoven's *Third Leonora Overture* (H.M.V.). Both of these recordings are of recent issue, and their reproduction on a new model H.M.V. machine was exceedingly fine. Orchestral reproduction by means of the gramophone is still far short of perfection. It has not reached as near the ideal as string quartet and vocal recordings have; nevertheless it is improving steadily and the reproduction of this symphony astonished many of the members present. No small praise is due to the new H.M.V. machine for its part in this present-day high-water mark of orchestral reproduction. As to the musical aspect of the chief event of the evening, some members said that Tchaikovsky was too prone to produce noise with often little else, but many said how much they were stirred by the beauty and power of the symphony. Throughout its ten record sides it held the attention of the members closely and anyone acquainted with an average musical audience will realise that this is praise. The rest of the evening was devoted to a demonstration of the latest records presented by the Vocalion Co.

Mr. Frank Caruana gave a well-balanced and attractive programme of records at the April meeting. The splendid record of the *Death of Boris*, by Chaliapine, was the most outstanding vocal item, and among the others Siegfried's *Funeral March* (H.M.V.) was most impressive. The society's machine wears a lifebelt, and as everyone present was familiar with at least one record in Mr. Caruana's programme, an opportunity was afforded of testing the effect of this intriguing device. The attendance at this meeting was very poor. To be exact, it was slightly less than one-fifth of the total membership of the society. It is much to be regretted that such a large number of members are so apathetic. If they have a grouse they evidently nurse it in silence. Oh, that they would come forward and speak up and be interested! Five keen members are better than fifty of the kind who do nothing for their society beyond paying their subscriptions, and a society composed of the latter must eventually go under. If every member of the Dublin Gramo-

phone Society was as keen as Mr. Caruana, the hon. reporting secretary would not have to write a report like this.—NOEL C. WEBB, *Hon. Reporting Secretary*.

ERITH TECHNICAL INSTITUTE.—A very successful meeting was held at the Erith Technical Institute on Friday evening, March 26th, the subject for the evening being Gilbert and Sullivan's operas. A good gathering of members and friends were present, and the recital which included selections from the *Gondoliers*, *Mikado*, *Iolanthe*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Yeomen of the Guard*, and *Pirates of Penzance*, was thoroughly enjoyed by all. All records were H.M.V. except the band selections, *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *Pirates of Penzance*, played by the band of H.M. 1st Life Guards (Vocalion K.05047). The second half was devoted to a selection of records kindly presented by the Parlophone Gramophone Co., Beethoven's *Spring Sonata for Violin and Piano* (Parlo. E.10414, 10415, 10416). This is a really excellent record by Edith Lorand and Michael Raucheisen, and was well appreciated. Two very good records followed, one by Robert Burg (Parlo. E.10422), singing two Wagner excerpts, one from *Das Rheingold*, and one from *Tannhäuser*, the other—a record by Emmy Bettendorf (Parlo. E.10421), singing two arias from *Ariadne in Naxos*, a fine little one-act opera by Richard Strauss. This record was thought surprisingly rich in melody, especially by those who have not regarded Strauss as tuneful. No mention need be made of Marek Weber and his orchestra, but the Parlophone Co. have succeeded in introducing another very fine record from this sparkling artist in a waltz, *Poet's Love* (Johann Strauss) (Parlo. E.10418); this was very much enjoyed.—A. W. KNIGHT, *Hon. Secretary*.

THE GLASGOW AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The meeting of February 24th was an Orchorsol night. Mr. J. S. Robertson, a member of our committee, provided an excellent programme with the aid of his table grand. The programme was a most excellent one, and comprised a very fine selection of chamber music, vocal solos, and orchestral pieces. This was highly appreciated by a full meeting of members, and Mr. Robertson is to be congratulated on the high excellence of the programme submitted. The Orchorsol instrument reproduced all the records with its usual accuracy and high excellence, its forwardness of tone, with all extraneous noises eliminated, being a special feature.

The meeting of March 8th was devoted to a ladies' competition, composed of two sections, vocal and instrumental. There was a good entry and many fine records were included. The winning records in each class were *The Volga Boatmen*, sung by Chaliapine, and *Nocturne in E flat*, played by Casals. An interesting feature was the fact that the prizes in both sections were won by the Misses Thomson, and they are to be congratulated on their success in their first effort. We hope to have more similar evenings next session.—T. MACFARLANE, *Hon. Secretary*.

HALIFAX AND DISTRICT RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—Members listened with keen enjoyment on March 23rd to a number of records of *Iolanthe*, prefaced and interspersed with comments by Mr. R. L. V. Bishop. Mr. Bishop is an enthusiastic lover of Gilbert and Sullivan opera, and he confessed that *Iolanthe* was his favourite.

On April 13th Mr. A. J. C. Hirst had for his subject "The Mastersingers of Nuremberg." Mr. Hirst said that the best way to appreciate Wagner was to listen to and follow the music closely. From some operas the listener got the most delightful sensations without any apparent effort, but in a Wagnerian opera the hearer had got to do his bit, because Wagner having put ideas into music, the music must be followed minutely to get at the meaning embodied. With Wagner every idea assumed a musical form. Wagner's theory was that in the "music drama" the music must lend itself unreservedly and continuously to intensify the emotional experiences of the text. Thus Wagner really worked with two plots—one in the music and one in the libretto. These worked hand in hand throughout all his operas, and the result was (the speaker said) the most perfect form of music drama. Mrs. Drury illustrated the principal motifs on the pianoforte. A library of records is now in being. Records are regularly received from the Parlophone and Vocalion companies, and these are played over on our meeting nights before being added to the library. Members have commented very favourably on these, and thanks are due to the donor companies. The summer session has now commenced, and meetings are held monthly instead of fortnightly.—J. S. WARING, *Hon. Secretary*, 15, Willow Field Road, Halifax.

LEEDS GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The monthly meeting was held as usual on the third Tuesday in the month, March 16th

Great interest was taken in the records of the Vocalion and Parlophone Companies, which were demonstrated by Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Price. It is now a feature of the meetings to hear the fine records issued by the two companies named, and they have always aroused very favourable comments. A discussion took place with regard to the report of our meetings appearing a month late in THE GRAMOPHONE. It was pointed out that it was because the meetings were held too late in the month and did not allow time for publication. It was decided that we hold the meetings on the first Tuesday in the month, commencing in September, as arrangements had been made to that date. The annual meeting will be held in May, when the secretary will be able to show a balance in hand.

The Leeds Gramophone Society held a whist drive and dance in the Y.M.C.A., on Thursday, March 18th, to provide a gramophone to the Leeds General Infirmary. The effort was a success in every way and over £21 was realised by sale of tickets and a balance of £15 16s. was the result.—H.S.

[A vivid description is regretfully omitted.—ED.]

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

On Monday, March 8th, a contingent from Liverpool attended a meeting of the Manchester Gramophone Society and submitted a programme typical of Merseyside activities. The president, Mr. F. W. Buzzard, and the writer were responsible for the programme, which was very kindly received and as our good friend Mr. C. J. Brennand, the secretary of the Manchester Society, has already furnished a report of the proceedings it but remains to tender our very best thanks for the exceedingly kind welcome and hospitality accorded to us and for the warmly appreciative manner in which our little effort was acknowledged.

On the same evening a meeting was held, under the direction of Mr. C. G. F. Johnstone, at the Liverpool headquarters, and I am assured by those who were present that they spent a most enjoyable evening. The committee had arranged, with some trepidation, let it be admitted, that the meeting to be held on Monday, March 22nd, should be devoted to a recital of the records of the opera of *Parsifal*, and Mr. T. Nelson very kindly undertook to provide the programme. Whatever qualms Mr. Nelson and the officers may have had about submitting so severe and highbrow a programme were speedily dissipated, for the audience listened throughout with the greatest pleasure and interest and with a very obvious desire to grasp the full beauty and significance of the music. The appealing tones of the *Prelude*, the moving phrases of the *Grail Scene*, now deeply poignant with pain and distress and now breathing calm and confident faith and hope, and the incomparable *Good Friday Music*, were all listened to with almost reverent attention. Mr. Nelson used a gramophone of his own design and construction—of generous proportions and full, sweet tone—and he is to be congratulated on producing such a splendid instrument.—J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The first meeting in the society's new quarters in the Milton Hall, 244, Deansgate, was held on April 12th, an excellent and varied programme being supplied by Mr. W. H. Partington. In fitting celebration of the occasion the opening item, Dvořák's *Carnival Overture*, was played by Mr. Rastall, the founder and president of the society. The best vocal items were Galli-Curci's *O luce di quest'anima* and Rosa Ponselle's new H.M.V. record of *O patria mia* (*Aida*). Norman Long, in *The Drage Way* caused considerable amusement. Of the instrumental and orchestral numbers Rachmaninoff, in his *Concerto No. 2 in C minor*, supported by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra (a Victor record), and the second portion of the above-mentioned *Carnival Overture* were excellent, but the honours of the evening undoubtedly lay with the magnificent recordings of the Symphony Orchestra in the *Venusberg Music, Part 1*, and the *Pilgrims' Chorus, Act III. (Tannhäuser)*, which, rendered by the new H.M.V. instrument, provided by Messrs. Hime and Addison, Deansgate, gave an amazing revelation of the enormous advance already made in massed orchestral and choral reproductions. Of a different type, but almost equally wonderful in recording, were the vocal selections from *The Student Prince*, by the Light Opera Company, the soprano voice here attaining almost perfection of beauty. The interval was spent very enjoyably in the café—another welcome innovation—and at the close of a most successful evening the heartiest thanks of the members were offered to Mr. Partington.—CECIL J. BRENNAND, *Hon. Secretary and Treasurer*.

NELSON AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE MUSIC SOCIETY.—

On Tuesday, March 16th, the above society spent an evening with

Mozart, Mr. F. Atkins being responsible for the excellent lecture and choice of records. These included the *Overture to The Marriage of Figaro* and the first movement of the *Symphony in G minor*, while of vocal music the examples were *Gentle Lady* (*Don Giovanni*) and *O Isis and Osiris* (*Magic Flute*). Excerpts from two violin concertos were played, the *Rondo* from No. 4 in D, and the *Adagio and Rondo* from No. 3 in G, and also a minuet, one of Mozart's early compositions, which pleased most of the audience very much. Mr. Atkins' remarks on the genius and style of the composer and on certain incidental aspects of musical form added greatly to the lasting value of the evening's entertainment.

Several of the welcome gifts of the Parlophone Co. were well received. These included part of the *Symphony in E flat*, and of the Beethoven *Sonata in F for violin and piano*, both of which are certain favourites. Lighter fare for other tastes was provided by *Melody* (Gluck), *Cavatina* (Raff), by the selections from *The Merry Widow* and four Strauss waltzes. Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf rendered beautifully two Schubert songs, and Maz Burg was intensely dramatic in two Wagner arias. The machine used was a new model H.M.V., kindly lent by Mr. Croasdale.

The meeting on March 30th was in charge of one of our youngest members, Mr. W. Pearson, whose subject was "From Bach to Beethoven," Bach and Handel, the earliest masters of the period, were represented by part of Bach's *Concerto in D minor for two violins and orchestra* and a gavotte and by *The trumpet shall sound* and a minuet by Handel. The second period, dominated by Haydn and Mozart, yielded the minuet from the latter's *Symphony in E flat*, part of a Haydn *Quartet in E flat*, the overture to *The Magic Flute*, and the only vocal record of the evening, *When a maiden takes your fancy*.

Mr. Pearson then spoke of Beethoven, and to illustrate this section had chosen the first and second movements of the *Seventh Symphony*, a Scherzo, a movement from a string quartet, and ended with the beautiful *Andante* from the *Fifth Symphony*. For this meeting Mr. De Luce had lent a Columbia Grafonola, for which we thank him.—MARGARET E. WADDINGTON, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—

On Saturday, April 10th, Mr. C. W. Hardisty commenced the programme with a number of records of miscellaneous makes, but of generally satisfactory character. The *Pagliacci* selections, Black Diamonds Band (Zono.) was an excellent specimen of the cheap record. *Bei mannern Welche Liebe Fühlen* (*Zauberflöte*) (Mozart), Schorr and Bettendorff (duet) (Polydor), was another to which special attention is due. The Harpsichord record of Winifred Christie playing Gluck's *Gavotte* (Vocalion) has a quaint old-world charm about it; and the rest being mainly H.M.V. celebrities, can be largely taken for granted. Some fine numbers were also kindly sent to the society by the Vocalion Co., of which the following were remarkable: *Nell Gwynne Dances* (German), H.M. Life Guards Band; *Sonate for two violins and piano, Allegro* (Handel), Fachiri, d'Aranyi, and Hobday; *And now let me read my fate* (*Carmen*), Enid Cruickshank; *Son of mine* (Wallace) Roy Henderson. The latter part of the programme was supplied by Mr. L. Ivory, consisting of a series of selections from *Faust*, sung in Italian and recorded by the H.M.V. Co. *Act 2, The Fair*, in seven records; *Act 4, The Church*, in three; but as a substitute for the usual orchestral prelude, Mr. Ivory played one of the new H.M.V. organ records, which created the suitable artistic atmosphere for the occasion. Finally *Act 4, A Street*, and *Act 5, Prison Scene*, constituted a musical miniature of the grand opera, which was loudly applauded by the audience. Connoisseurs of the rare and curious are invited to attend our next meeting of Saturday, May 8th, when the undersigned will exhibit an unconventional gramophone with external amplifier, which is believed to be the largest gramophone yet made. Applications for membership to Mr. L. Ivory, 34, Granville Road, Stroud Green, N. 4.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*, 126, Whidborne Buildings, King's Cross, W.C.1.

NORTH WEST GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The April meeting included a long and varied demonstration of the Dousona. Members were struck by the wonderful value; it is superior to some machines at twice the price, and to anyone with a slight predilection for romanticism it is absolutely *it*. All the new organ records came out particularly well. Programme included: *Tosca*—all the modern versions of the *Prayer* including the beautiful Parlophone one, and the latest Stracciaci *Te Deum*, the finest record he has made for years, spoilt by the omission of the choral part. *Tannhäuser*—*O star of eve*, *Elizabeth's Prayer*, *Pilgrims' Chorus*,

all disappointing. The same can be said of the new *Church Scene* from *Faust*. In the *Easter Hymn* from *Cavalleria*, one of the most beautiful things of its kind ever composed, Columbia have been rather more successful, but this should have been got on to one side of a 12in. The latest Orchorsol sound-box was submitted to many tests and proved satisfying in every way, and at both ends of the scale. We can recommend it to those who wish to hear other things on records besides timpani and double bass.—E. G. LAMBLE, *Hon. Secretary*, 51, Balmoral Road, N.W. 2.

PRESTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At our meeting on Tuesday, March 16th, there was a good attendance of members. The programme was largely built up from records presented to our library. The *Overture, La Grand Pague Russe* (Voc.), was much enjoyed. The *Sonata in D* (Bach), H. Bliss ('cello), S. Chapple (piano), came in for a round of applause; violin solo, *Valse* (Cramei), by Daisy Kennedy (Duo.) was considered a gem. *Spring Sonata, Op. 24, in F* (Beethoven), Edith Lorand (violin), Michael Rancheisen (piano) (Parlo. 3-12 in.) was delightful; the piano tone is good; considering the price of these records they are excellent value. The violin solo, *Cavatina* (Raff), by Tossy Spiwakowsky (Parlo.) was very much appreciated; with a fibre needle in a Jewel sound-box it is very mellow and pleasing. Other items of a pleasing and varied character brought a very pleasant evening, the success of which is shown by the enrolment of five new members. The concert was given on a Columbia Grafonola, kindly lent by Mr. Mosley, one of our local dealers, to whom we tender our best thanks. To the Parlophone Co., Ltd., the Vocalion Co., Ltd., and the Duophone Co., Ltd., we tender our sincere thanks for their generous gift of records for inclusion in our library. At our next meeting on April 6th a lecture was given on the importance of correct needle-track alignment, by Mr. F. Cartmel, one of our members.—W. NEAL, *Hon. Secretary*, 250, Lancaster Road, Preston.

RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—A meeting of the above society at the Public Library Cottage took place on Monday, March 15th. The members were to have had the opportunity of hearing a lecture and demonstration of the Orchorsol gramophone, but unfortunately the company was unable to keep the engagement. Thanks to the co-operation of Mr. Adams, Messrs. Bensteds, a substitute programme was promptly arranged which entirely suited the members' musical tastes. The first half of the programme contained recordings of recent issue, viz.: *Symphonie Fantastique* (Berlioz), Symphony Orchestra conducted by Weingartner (Col.). *La Cinqumtaine* (Marie) and *Ave Maria* (Bach-Gounod), 'cello soli by Cedric Sharpe (H.M.V.). *My mother bids me bind my hair and Nymphs and Shepherds*, Elsie Suddaby (soprano) (H.M.V.). *Canzonetta*, Moschetto and his Orchestra (Voc.). *Easter Hymns*, Phillip Dawson (organist) (H.M.V.). *Sonata* (Sammartini), Mme. Suggia, the 'cellist (H.M.V.). The second part comprised records selected from the private collections of Messrs. Grant, Ross, and Fittall, which included: *Oberon Overture* (Weber), Band of H.M. 1st Life Guards (Voc.). *Hungarian Rhapsody* (Liszt), Paderewski (H.M.V.). *L'Agréable* (Mardis), Howard Bliss ('cellist) (Voc.). *Nur eine Waffe*, Wagner's *Parsifal*, Lauritz Melchior (Parlo.). *Rondo Capriccioso* (Mendelssohn), Roger Mulos (pianist) (Fonotipia). *Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart), Aeolian Orchestra (Voc.). *Valse Caprice* (Darewski) and *Rustle of Spring* (Sinding), Max Darewski (Zono.).

A cordial vote of thanks was passed to the foregoing members and to Mr. T. S. Allen for organising and demonstrating the programme.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN, *Hon. Press Secretary*, 32, Deanhill Road, East Sheen, S.W. 14.

SHEFFIELD GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—Our meeting on March 2nd was devoted to a special demonstration of the Orchorsol gramophone; that it aroused interest was evidenced by the large number of members present. Mr. Brayne brought with him a table model which, though exceedingly well finished, is moderate in price. The Orchorsol Company's latest sound-box was a feature of the machine, and we were given a free hand in the choice of records. As the new issues for March were available these afforded sufficient scope to test the instrument on every type of reproduction and considering that the loudest tone needles were used in most cases it acquitted itself well. The only criticism the writer has to offer is that the sound-box may have been adjusted a little too delicately for some of the heavier recordings. A very fine H.M.V. record is that of Rosa Ponselle, who has a magnificent voice. The *Kreutzer Sonata*, by Isolde Menges and De Greef, is also excellent. The Columbia list contains some good things—the *Britannia Overture*, conducted by the composer (Mackenzie) and the *Symphonie Fantastique*, in addition

to the disc by Stracciari. The Vocalion Company always present a series of interesting items, and the Sapellnikoff record is exceptionally good, as well as those by Luella Paikin and Frank Titterton. We always look forward to records by Edith Lorand and the Parlophone Company have issued three discs in which she collaborates with Michael Rauchsien, playing Beethoven's *Spring Sonata*. The Parlophone records of Emmy Bettendorf and Robert Burg were well received as was also the pleasing Strauss waltz, *Poet's Love*, by Marek Weber's Orchestra.

Mr. S. H. Gilling can always be relied upon to provide a good programme, and it was in his capable hands on March 16th. The sixteen items submitted were excellent, and Mr. Gilling was heartily thanked for his effort.—THOS. H. BROOKS, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The first trial of a dual programme took place on March 27th, when Mr. G. E. W. Herbert and Mr. S. F. D. Howarth were the concert-givers, the former with a Russian programme and the latter with one devoted to duets from grand opera. In the Russian numbers Tchaikovsky was naturally well-represented, and we heard the *Marche Slav* played by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra by the new means, and an excerpt from the *Pathetic Symphony* by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, and in addition the *Canzonetta* from the *Violin Concerto*, played by Jascha Heifetz, and *A Ball Room*, sung by Olga Haley. The remaining Russian composers were Rimsky-Korsakov, Glinka, Borodine, Moussorgsky, and Koene-mann, from whom we had the *Chanson Indoue*, the *Journey*, and *Death's Serenade*, the dances from *Prince Igor* and the *Death of Boris*, one of Chaliapine's outstanding efforts. The remaining programme was an attempt to present some novelties, and incidentally illustrate some typical singing of the past. Italian opera was predominant, illustrations being heard from *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, *Rigoletto*, *Trovatore*, *Traviata*, and *Aida*, while *Faust*, *Pearl Fishers*, and *Bohème* added their quota and included the latest example of the new recording, the *Death Scene* from *Bohème*, by Lucrezia Bori and Tito Schipa, which at last seems to have done away with the brass band accompaniment with which we have long been familiar. As usual a selection of the latest issue of Vocalion records was played, to the satisfaction of members.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, *Reporting Secretary*.

THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.—Wagner as a subject for lectures seems inexhaustible. It is strange what a fascination the little man has for us. We have to thank Mr. Peter Latham not only for a very enlightening discourse on Wagner, but also for the kindness which prompted him to visit us at all. He confined his remarks entirely to the songs of the operas, and through these traced for us the growth and development of Wagner's strong individuality. We started off with *Rienzi's Prayer* and the *Star of Eve*, with their pronouncedly Italian influence, and landed at *Sachs' Monologue* by way of *Elsa's Dream*, *Winter Storms*, the *Prize Song*, and the *Liebestod*, etc. The most remarkable thing, as Mr. Latham pointed out, was the sureness and steadiness with which the orchestra increased in importance until it not only held an independent interest, but actually put the voice part in the shade. Needless to add, we hope that Mr. Latham will find an opportunity to visit us again. We meet at the Clock Tower Chambers, Lewisham, and the secretary, 34, Chalsey Road, S.E. 4, will be glad to deal with any enquiries.—FLORENCE GAMON, *Recording Secretary*.

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[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

THE TCHAIKOVSKY FOURTH SYMPHONY RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I sincerely trust none of your readers have had the experiences I have had with the records of the above symphony. At the outset let me say I play with Victor soft-toned needles, test the point of each needle before using, and use a new needle for every single record. After playing this work half a dozen times I noticed a sort of *col legno* effect twice in the Scherzo (not in the score, of course). On passing another time to the Finale the needle kept suddenly twice in one groove, with a corresponding repetition of the music, until I moved it on. On examining the record a very apparent grooving of the surface was apparent. I have never had this experience with any record during my 23 years' collecting. It looks as if the records would not stand up under steel. They still play well with fibre needles, but I am not a "fibroid." As regards the rendition, the strings stand out very distinctly, but are reed-like, and seem unnatural, not like the old recording. The 'cello, however, is good. Reeds are variable. Near the opening of the first movement, where a flute is indicated with the clarinet, it is inaudible. The oboe at times is far too soft. Clarinet does not come out always as it should. The bassoon seems the instrument the most distinct. Trumpets are very prominent, and this style of recording should suit that terrible combination a brass band. The "shriek" of the violins at times, especially with a *tutti* of the other instruments, is only endurable with a fibre needle. I am afraid to play these records any longer with a steel one, and am convinced a fibre is the only resort for a successful rendition. We must be glad to have the symphony, as it is rarely heard, but we must wish it was as beautifully recorded as *Francesca da Rimini* or Elgar's *Second Symphony*. The present recording can only be looked on as an experiment or a mistake.

San Diego, California.

Faithfully,
FRANCIS MEAD.

NEW RECORDINGS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I very heartily endorse the remarks of Mr. J. J. Dunne in your February issue. In my opinion the *Parsifal* records are an enormous advance. They and Tchaikovsky's *Fourth Symphony* (H.M.V.) stand out head and shoulders above any records I have ever heard, so much so that after hearing them I quite fail to appreciate the old recording.

Personally, I should now never dream of buying a record that does not come up to their standard, and I shall wait patiently until they appear. I should be very indebted to those who find fault if they can tell me of any records of any make that are as good or that can even approach them, for I cannot understand their adverse criticisms. My great regret is that the other new process records (H.M.V.) that I have heard are nowhere near the quality of the above, and one wonders why, if they can get such marvellous results with some, they cannot get it with all. The two works that I have mentioned I find no good on the old H.M.V. pattern gramophone, and therefore probably other machines would not do them justice. They should be played on the new H.M.V. model with either their No. 4 or a Lenthal sound-box and with fibre needles.

Mortimer.

Yours faithfully,
G. D. LAKE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I am sure no one who is interested in orchestral recording wishes to "crab" the new process or to deny its infinite promise for the future, but it is so obviously in an experimental stage that it is a moot point whether it is quite fair either to the artists or the public to bring out quite so many specimens of "exhilarating masses of sound" as we are getting at the present time. It is all very fine for Mr. Dunne to remind us that the whole harmonic system is built up on the bass, but after all the melodic line is generally with the treble, and melody existed

before harmony, and is quite as important. Nor can one attach negligible importance to the question of instrumental colour. If a composer has written passages which depend for their effect on beautiful contrasts between the colours of the different instruments, or masses of instruments, they obviously lose all point if the reproduction fails to give any distinction between the timbres of the various instruments. The new recording up to the present seems to have failed altogether to suggest string tone. If you compare, for instance, Thibaud in the César Franck with Thibaud in the Beethoven Romance, it seems to me that the difference is that the former at its worst gives you imperfect recording of the violin, while in the latter at its best you get perfect reproduction—of the tin whistle. The most satisfying recordings I have heard by the new process are Harold Samuels' piano record of two Bach pieces, which you can really listen to as music without thinking all the time about the recording, and the new organ records. I am not grumbling because I have a fairly large collection containing quite a number of records which almost satisfy my simple tastes and personally rather welcome a temporary relief from the financial strain of a habit I had contracted of trying to keep up with the number of complete orchestral works we were getting every month. It is all very well to "listen for the bass" on records that you know, because your mind sub-consciously supplies the upper parts, but if the work is unfamiliar over-emphasis of the bass may tend to give you an altogether wrong impression of the shape of the tune.

Purley.

Yours truly,
LIONEL GILMAN.

THE CHOPIN SONATA IN B MINOR.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—I have the greatest admiration for the difficult and valuable work of your reviewers. But there is one sentence in the critique of the Chopin *B minor Sonata* which fills me with profound astonishment: "I have no fault to find with the recording..." Considering that Columbia advertise this work as "The Mightiest Pianoforte recording yet," we are, I think, entitled to a much fuller dissertation on its qualities as a recording.

Permit me to offer my views, which—though admittedly not expert—may have some merit as those of an enthusiast of many years' standing and a good deal of experience. I confess to two strong prejudices—a distaste for the majority of piano records and an intense dislike of radio and the tone associated with it. For these reasons I have experienced (with but few exceptions, which I need not detail) disappointment with numerous pianoforte records the tone of which has resembled harpsichord, banjo, mandoline, xylophone, musical box, and (in the case of the "electric" system of recording, which is, of course, in its infancy), the old original firebells mentioned by Edgar Allan Poe. With frank scepticism I tried this Chopin sonata. I duly digested your reviewer's views on the music and interpretation and placed the recommended fibre (a hardened one) in the No. 7 sound-box of my Grafonola (large table grand, 23A), and, for once in my life, I was completely "flattened out" by a gramophonic reproduction of the pianoforte.

It is obviously not old-style recording; therefore it must be "electric." But if this is so, where is that extraordinary loud-speaker effect, that hard metallic tone, that harsh bell-like clangour, and the other funny noises? They are all conspicuous by their absence. Instead—making reasonable allowance for the gramophonic medium—we have *the piano itself*, with all that it is capable of expressing at the hands of a great pianist, devoid alike of the inadequacy of the old method of recording and the exasperating defects of the new.

Consequently, like your critic, "I have no fault to find with the recording." But, unlike him, I have much to say in praise of it, which, however inadequately expressed, is "fair comment on a matter of public interest."

"The Mightiest Pianoforte Recording Yet!" Is it? So far as my experience of such things goes, most decidedly so! All readers of THE GRAMOPHONE will be on tenterhooks to know what you think of it.

London, S.W. 17.

Yours faithfully,
J. C. W. CHAPMAN.

[The Editor's opinion is on page 500 of the April number, where the Sonata is misprinted as in A minor.]

A GOOD LIST.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—There has been lately much controversy concerning the best records with which the intending gramophile may commence his collection. If you will extend your courtesy to me

by publishing my communication, I should like to give a list of what in my estimation are the twelve best records; they are the following:—

1. *Glück, das mir verblieb* and *Dich, teure Halle*, by Jeritzta (H.M.V., D.A.524), 6s. 2. *Eil molei rachmin* and *Rachmono deoni*, by G. Sirota (Imperial de Luxe, 102x), 2s. 3. *Il balen and O, Carlo, ascolta*, by De Luca (H.M.V., D.A.190), 6s. 4. *At Dawning*, by May Edmonds, and *I hear a thrush at eve* (Ludgate), 2s. 6d. 5. *Magiche Note* and *Sérénade Espagnole*, by Caruso (H.M.V., D.A.122), 6s. 6. *L'Allegria del Bataillon* and *Tristes Amores*, by José Mardones (Spanish H.M.V., D.A.710). 7. *Spanish Gold* and *The Witch of Bowden*, by McEachern (Vocalion X.9512), 3s. 8. *Onaway, awake, beloved*, and *To the Forest*, by Roy Henderson (Vocalion, X.9513), 3s. 9. *Worthy is the Lamb* and *Lift up your heads, O ye gates*, by the Royal Choral Society (H.M.V., D.1057), 6s. 6d. 10. *Fa la nana* and *In mezo al mar*, by Dusolina Giannini (Victor 45413). 11. *A brown bird singing and Evensong*, by Dora Labbette (Columbia D.1466). 12. *Parmi veder le lagrime* and *Una furtiva lagrima*, by Caruso (H.M.V., D.B.126).

I can specially recommend Nos. 4, 7, 8, and 9. No. 10 is exquisite, the most perfect soprano disc I have yet heard. In No. 5 we have the rare experience of hearing some wonderful falsetto notes by Caruso. No. 6 is the best bass voice record I have ever heard. But I award the palm to No. 2; it is truly magnificent. Sirota, who has lately been much in the limelight in your paper, is again truly magnificent; I have never heard a like voice or a more wonderful organ accompaniment. In conclusion I would like to inform your contributor, Mr. Klein, that there is in existence a record of *Lend me your aid*, sung by Edward Lloyd; this record, which is coupled with *Come into the garden, Maud*, on H.M.V., D.821 is a very fine example of the grand old singer's art. Wishing your excellent paper all success. Yours faithfully,
Beckenham. L. ACASTER.

DUOPHONE AND WAVEOLA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—Readers will no doubt be interested to hear that the combination of the Duophone sound-box and tone-arm with the Waveola amplifier constitutes, in the opinion of all my friends who have heard my machine as so fitted, something more nearly approaching perfection in reproduction than anything else they have ever heard. Such a machine may be constructed by anyone able to do the fitting only for about £15, and if the cabinet be home made, for less.

Despite the fact that a loud record actually causes the floor of an ordinary carpeted and furnished room to actually vibrate, there is a complete absence of overtones and blasting, even with the harshest test record (and I have some of these!), and yet the *pp* passages are produced over the full gamut with equality and perfect tone, and I think you will agree that the latter two characteristics, when in combination, constitute something out of the ordinary.

As soon as I discovered this absence of blasting with harsh records, I drilled out the needle socket with the object of still further increasing the volume, and when full power is required, it is now possible to insert the needle so that only one sixteenth of an inch projects from the holder. Readers who have experimented on these lines will appreciate what this means in the way of added volume. This means of varying quantity of tone is, with any machine far preferable to the use of medium or soft-tone needles, as these interfere with quality as well as quantity, and for this reason, when a very soft result is required, I prefer a needle extension socket, to fit in the needle socket of sound-box. By some such means the length of the needle may be varied from just a point to one and a half inches, or even more, and at the latter length the volume is a mere whisper, but the quality unimpaired.

I have been experimenting for something like five years, but I dare not now make any further alterations, having never attained anything approaching my present results.

London, N. 1. Yours truly,
H. GORDON TIDEY.

STEEL NEEDLES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Reverting to your January issue, page 327, Mr. E. C. K. Walter, lecturing to the Manchester Gramophone Society, claims in favour of fibre needles that the record with which he is demonstrating, although having been played between 700 and 800 times, betrays practically no trace of surface noise or blast, which means next to no wear. As I am a firm believer in steel

needles for tone, I should be glad to know if any of your readers who are users of steel needles cannot beat this. If so, what make of needles do they use? Yours truly,
Norwich. J. L. T. SNEYD.

SUGGESTIONS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have several thoughts concerning gramophony which through the medium of your paper I should like to make public.

Firstly there has been, as you are aware, much attention paid of late to the recording of choral works, but, however, up to the present, the works selected for reproduction have been for the most part ones which have been recorded oft-times before—for example, the *Hallelujah Chorus* from the *Messiah*, on Columbia, His Master's Voice, etc. I should like to suggest that our gramophone companies give us choral records of the *Last Judgment* (Spohr), *Christmas Oratorio* and *Passion Music* (Bach), *Hymn of Praise* (Mendelssohn), *Redemption* (Gounod), *Requiem* (Brahms), and the *Crucifixion* (Stainer). I only know of one existing record of the *Redemption*—namely, *Unfold ye portals*, on Victor No. 35075, and of the *Crucifixion* only two: *God so loved the world* on Victor 18873, and *Could ye* and the *Appeal of the Crucified* on Victor 35752. Naturally, as these records are issued by the Victor Company they are somewhat difficult to obtain in England.

The second point to which I would draw your attention and incidentally, I hope, that of our gramophone companies, is the fact that many of our best singers are as yet either unrecorded altogether or scantily recorded. I would suggest that the recording firms enter into negotiations with Clara Serena, Joseph Farrington, Frederic Woodhouse, Ben Morgan, and Flora Woodman, that we may have their voices bequeathed for all time to the coming generations. It is almost unbelievable that Clara Serena, magnificent contralto that she is, should be at present unobtainable upon a record, or that only one record of Flora Woodman, England's finest lyric soprano (D.289, *Echo* and *Let the bright Seraphim*) is now obtainable.

Thirdly, there is the fact that although records exist of almost every type of vocal organism, yet at present one can obtain no adequate reproduction of the male soprano, although there is a record issued many years ago by His Master's Voice of Professor Moreschi, the famous male soprano of the Sistine-Vatican Choir (D.830, *Oremus pro Pontifice*); there were others, but this one only remains, and as the gramophone was then little more than experimental the true beauty of this most rare voice is not realised.

Beckenham. Yours sincerely,
JOHN NAUNTON-RUSHEN.

SPOTTING FAVOURITES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—The proof of the pudding is in the eating. I have kept a list for the last two years of the records I have played. Just under 600 sides have been played 7,465 times—i.e., an average of a little over 12 a piece, but only a few have reached as many as 30 hearings:—

Piano Quartet in C minor, first movement (Fauré) (63); *Piano Quartet in C minor*, second movement (Fauré) (48); *Two-violin Concerto*, first movement (Bach), Kreisler-Zimbalist (47); *Symphony No. 2, in D*, second movement (Brahms) (45); *Two-violin Concerto*, second and third movements (Bach) (42); *Symphony No. 2, in D*, first movement (Brahms) (41); *Les Pêcheurs des Perles, Te Crois Encore* (Bizet), Caruso (38); *Hansel and Gretel, Hexenritt* (Humperdinck), Boulton (37); *Kohn Sonata in D minor*, first movement (Brahms), Catterall (35); *Quintet in G minor*, first movement (Mozart), London String Quartet (35); *Piano Quartet in C minor*, fourth movement (Fauré) (35); *Symphony No. 2*, fourth movement (Brahms) (35); *Shropshire Lad, Rhapsody* (Butterworth) (33); *London Symphony*, first movement (Vaughan Williams) (31); *Rout* (Bliss) (30).

Some composers naturally suffer from diffusion, especially Mozart, Brahms, Franck, and Delius. Thus in total I have played about 1,250 sides of Brahms and 900 of Mozart. May I mention that my list contains three orchestral records conducted by Dr. Adrian Boult, which though not by any means new, I find quite amongst the best. I would also like to recommend my only song, which is I think, the pick of the whole Celebrity catalogue. What does Mr. Herman Klein think? Yours sincerely,
Sheffield. J. L. WING.

(P.S.—I notice that my favourite Fauré has been withdrawn. I am surprised no one has boomed this delightful, though badly cut, work.)

FROM CANADA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—May I be permitted to add my remarks to others that have appeared in the columns of previous issues? In reference to the various criticisms of the work of the reviewers of this magazine, allow me to state that the very able way in which "K. K." outlined his defence in the January, 1926, number, should overcome all objections in future to this able department. While I, above all, do not profess to be a musical critic, at the same time, being thoroughly competent in my own profession (forgive the rather dogmatic note), I would naturally deem it rather presumptuous on a layman's part to attempt to tell me exactly how my work should be done. In fact, I should ask him where he served his apprenticeship. Yet, at occasional times a layman may have a suggestion, which the craftsman—a true craftsman—will always value. To my mind the music critic falls in the same category as the skilled craftsman, and I am sure "K. K." or the other reviewers will value a suggestion from the one who appreciates music without being a competent critic himself or herself. In fact, myself falling into the category of a layman where music is concerned, but one, nevertheless, who thoroughly appreciates it, I am going to make a suggestion which I think does not impinge upon the professional aspect of the critic, and that is, that in all cases, if possible, your reviewers, and even correspondents should mention the class of machine, sound-box, and needle used in their reviews. Sometimes they do.

Another little note in passing. The English record manufacturers have done a lot of good work in fostering the movement for good-class recorded music. They have really a lot to be proud of. Some people state the American is not musical. In spite of the abnormal jazz craze over here, it is a mistaken fallacy to label the U.S.A. as unmusical. In fact, just the reverse is the case. But our record companies fall far short of satisfying the need of the musical public. The Victor, Columbia, and Brunswick between them, do not give us what one of the English companies produce per month. Hence my buying records from England.

In closing may I remark upon the all-round excellence of the Vocalion records. Over 60 per cent. of my collection—about 500—are English Vocalions. I find them so clearly recorded and true to tone. Interpretation of the big works I leave to the critics or one's own taste, but the recording, to my mind, taken on an average, does not have to take second place to any of the other companies' products, and that in spite of a lower price.

Yours faithfully,

Montreal, Canada.

BEDFORD R. THACKER.

"SYMPHONIC JAZZ."

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—In his review of the H.M.V. record of Eric Coates's *Selfish Giant*, played by Jack Hylton's Orchestra, "K. K." seems to be in doubt as to the programme basis of the work. The "Fantasia" is based, of course, upon the Oscar Wilde story bearing the same title, and the various episodes follow the incidents of that familiar story graphically and obviously.

"K. K." is, I think, a little mistaken when he writes: "This seems to me a quite ineffective attempt (I take it) to blend jazz and light music." When I heard the work in the Albert Hall at one of the London ballad concerts, I was convinced that there was no attempt to blend anything with anything. The work appealed to me as being the fulfilled desire of a gifted composer to express himself in terms of a jazz band, just as other gifted composers have chosen the medium of the military band. On that occasion I was prompted to make the following remarks: "Why are we so concerned about the pedigree of a jazz band that we attempt to give it a veneer of good behaviour by receiving it into the drawing-rooms of music—that is to say, the concert-halls? There are some who ask the riddle 'When is a jazz band not a jazz band?' giving as their answer, 'When it is playing a symphony.'" But the riddle is not good. It were better to ask: "When is a symphony not a symphony?" The answer most decidedly is: "When it is played by a jazz band." That is to say, I agree with "K. K." that the word "symphonic" in this connection is pretentious and misleading. Indeed, I think he himself has been misled by the description and has been induced "Chercher midi à quatorze heures." He boldly affirms that jazz holds no possibilities of development. But this essay of Eric Coates plainly points the way to the development of jazz, not in the way of symphonic construction, but simply as jazz. I count myself among those who can appreciate anything good of its kind. It is a dangerous kind of temperament I know, and can easily

lead one to run violently down a steep place. But I have always been attracted by the best of jazz music and the best of jazz playing, if only for the fine measure of technical attainment which together they evolve. Bad jazz, of course, is an abomination, more so than any other thing in low degree; but let me hear, perhaps just once in a week and for a period of five minutes, the slick organisation of Brooke Johns' band or the Savoy Orpheans, and I am fired by the overwhelming thought that even a riot can be drilled and controlled—even chaos can be reduced to simple elements. I believe that an excess of the "Adagio" and "Legato" of Lieder-singing (for example) can induce a lethargy fatal to criticism and interpretation alike; therefore on occasions I resort to the "Vivace" and "Staccato" of *Smile a little bit*, and so I regain my normal "Andante" pulse.

Why should it be impossible for jazz to develop, when we admit that anything written for a jazz band is jazz music? It is certain that some composers will never be attracted by the medium; Vaughan Williams, for instance. But others will follow Mr. Coates's lead, we may be sure. Let them avoid the "symphonic" snag, however, and be content with the bargain they make. Let them be utterly unashamed and unselfconscious, and jazz will develop freely enough.

Yours, etc.

London, S.W. 1.

BASIL MAINE.

"OPERA AT HOME."

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I should like to point out here a few errors which I have come across in the book "Opera at Home," published by the Gramophone Company. These are chiefly due to the use of several different titles for operatic arias.

For instance, the duet between Aida and Amonasro, in the third act of Verdi's *Aida* is given under two titles, "Ciel mio Padre" and "Rivedrai le foreste." From reading the descriptions of these records given in the book one is led to believe that they are two different parts of the duet, whereas they are identically the same, the remaining part of the duet being listed under the title of "Su dunque." The same thing occurs in the description of Romeo's solo in Act 2 of *Romeo and Juliet*. Both Anseau and Smirnoff sing the song complete, and yet the two records are titled differently.

The Mad Scene from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, which can be got complete on two records, is here listed under three, the first part having the titles of "Il dolce suono" and "Ardon gl'incensi."

The description of the duet from Act 3 of *Lohengrin* is very misleading. The record contains only a very small portion of the duet, yet the book would have you believe that the whole of that long scene can be had on two sides of a twelve-inch record.

Clarence Whitehill's record of *Mein Vater* from *Parsifal*, which really comes from Act 3, has been confused with Amfortas' solo from Act 1. What is given in the book is a description of this solo from Act 1 which has lately been recorded in the *Parsifal* set by Percy Hemming.

I should like to hear if any other reader has found any faults which have slipped my notice? Yours faithfully,

Keighley.

OPERA LOVER.

[The Editor, Mr. Klein and Mr. Little have already commented in this journal (see Vol. II., pages 47, 106; Vol. III., pages 352, 487) on the loose manner in which some H.M.V. records are labelled and indexed. It is, of course, absurd and confusing to index one record of a recit. and air under the opening words of the air and another under the opening words of the recit. One case that Opera Lover has missed occurs on pages 123, 124 of "Opera at Home." Who would imagine from the text at this point that Battistini's *O santa medaglia* not only gives a short recit. opening with these words, but also contains the whole of the aria *Dio possente*? There is an unfortunate error on page 384; *O casto fior* and *Promesse de mon avenir* are one and the same air, but the book implies quite definitely that they are different. Further, the book is not free from descriptive errors—e.g., the paragraph on Act 4 of *William Tell* (page 172) and that on *O muto asil* (page 174) are incorrect. Arnold knows quite well what has happened to Tell; "Guillaume est dans les fers" he sings, and he is gazing on the ruins of his father's house, the house in which he was born ("Asile héréditaire où mes yeux s'ouvrèrent au jour"). Then, again, the remarks on page 462 re *Il bacio* are incorrect. Zaza and Cathcart are not flirting in the wings; they are music-hall artists, and *Il bacio* is an item in their repertoire. I have also noticed a number of other minor errors.

Still, with all its faults, "Opera at Home" is a most useful and interesting little book, beautifully printed and sold at a remarkably low price, and no opera-lover should be without it.—"Piccolo."]

Analytical Notes and First Reviews

CHAMBER MUSIC

COLUMBIA.

L.1740-2 (three 12in. records, 19s. 6d.).—**The Lener String Quartet: Quartet in D minor, Op. 76, No. 2** (Haydn) and **Quartet in D major, poco lento** (César Franck). Eulenburg and Philharmonia min. scores.

The frequency with which complete recordings of Haydn quartets are now following one another is a matter over which chamber music enthusiasts have cause for congratulation. This month it is the Lener organisation that presents us with the late example in D minor, a work in which the composer's natural gaiety is qualified by a more serious vein of thought. Not that the music ever approaches the solemnity or the magnificence that are characteristic of such a writer as César Franck, the grand introduction to whose *Quartet in D* occupies the last side of the set of records. But the general feeling of the opening movement and the heavy tread of the minuet do seem to suggest that even for Haydn life was not all merriment.

The quartet begins with an *Allegro*, side 1 containing the exposition of the material, while side 2 gives the development, recapitulation and *coda*. The slow movement is concerned entirely with a single tune that is first stated in the major, then developed somewhat in the minor, and finally repeated in an embellished version in the major once more. It is very short, one side being sufficient to contain it all (omitting the repeats), but the rare fragrance and the perfect serenity of the music are above any standard of mere duration. Nothing need be said of the *Minuet* and *Trio* on side 4, beyond drawing attention to the canon in the *Minuet*; first and second violins play in octaves throughout this section, viola and 'cello (also in octaves) following them faithfully with the same tune, always a bar behind. The construction of the *Finale* is similar to that of the first movement, but readers are advised to listen to the tunes and rhythms without bothering about problems of form. If there has been a cloud on Haydn's face in the first and third movements it has certainly passed away here.

The recording is, I think, on the old lines. High notes are sometimes very faint and there are a few occasions on which the 'cello drops out of sight. But, speaking generally, balance and definition are good and there is a mellowness and at the same time a purity about the whole thing that I find very refreshing after the "storm and stress" of the Wagner records I have been listening to of late. The performance leaves little room for criticism and the players are equally at home in the very different style of Franck—though I am rather doubtful whether this fragment from his great work in D can afford to stand alone like this.

I listened to the quartet on my new table grand H.M.V. machine with a No. 4 sound-box and a medium needle. I only wish there had been another chamber music work on which to exercise the instrument. But we are approaching the off-season, I suppose.

P. L.

ORCHESTRAL

POLYDOR.

69723, 69724, 69725 (12in., 17s. 3d.).—**German Opera House Orchestra, Charlottenburg**, conducted by Leo Blech: **Symphony 6, in G ("Surprise")** (Haydn). Eulenburg and Philharmonia.

PARLOPHONE.

E.10433, 10434, 10435, 10436 (12in., 18s.).—**State Opera House Orchestra, Berlin: "Jupiter" Symphony** (Mozart). Eulenburg and Philharmonia. On reverse of last record: **Idomeneus Overture** (Mozart).

E.10437 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**State Opera House Orchestra, Berlin: Martha Overture** (Flotow).

E.10439. (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Edith Lorand Orchestra: Suite Orientale** (Poppy).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1079 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by Albert Coates: **Fire Music from The Valkyrie** (Wagner). Eulenburg.

D.1081 and 1082 (12in., 13s.).—**Royal Albert Hall Orchestra**, conducted by Sir L. Ronald: **Lyric Suite** (Shepherd Boy, Norwegian Rustic March, Nocturne and March of the Dwarfs) (Grieg).

D.1080 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Albert Coates: **Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine from The Twilight of the Gods** (Wagner).

C.1260 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**New Light Symphony Orchestra: The Merry Wives of Windsor Overture** (Nicolai).

VELVET FACE.

665 and 666 (12in., 11s.).—**Royal Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by J. Batten: **Siegfried Idyll** (Wagner). Eulenburg and Philharmonia.

VOCALION.

A.0259, 0260, 0261, and 0262 (four 12in., 22s.).—**Sapellnikoff: with Aeolian Orchestra** conducted by Stanley Chapple: **Pianoforte Concerto in B flat minor** (Tchaikovsky). Eulenburg.

K.05225 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Aeolian Orchestra** conducted by Stanley Chapple: **No. 1, Prelude, and No. 2, Forlane from Le Tombeau de Couperin** (Ravel).

COLUMBIA.

L.1723 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**New Queen's Hall Orchestra** conducted by Sir H. Wood: **Merry Wives of Windsor Overture** (Nicolai).

L.1733 and 1734 (two 12in., 13s.).—**London Symphony Orchestra** conducted by G. Schneevoigt: **Four Norwegian Dances, Op. 35** (Grieg).

9091 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**B.B.C. Wireless Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Percy Pitt: **Intermezzi from Acts 2 and 3 of The Jewels of the Madonna** (Wolf-Ferrari).

ACO.

G.15943 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Grosvenor Orchestra: Scarf Dance and Circassian Dance from Le Source Ballet Music** (Delibes).

G.15944 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Grosvenor Salon Orchestra: Minuet** (Boccherini) and **The Clock is Playing** (Blaauw).

BELTONA.

970 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—**Sutherland Orchestra: Fingal's Cave Overture** (Mendelssohn).

Gramophones used: H.M.V. new model, No. 126, sound-box No. 4, with constant reference to a large Columbia table grand, sound-box No. 7.

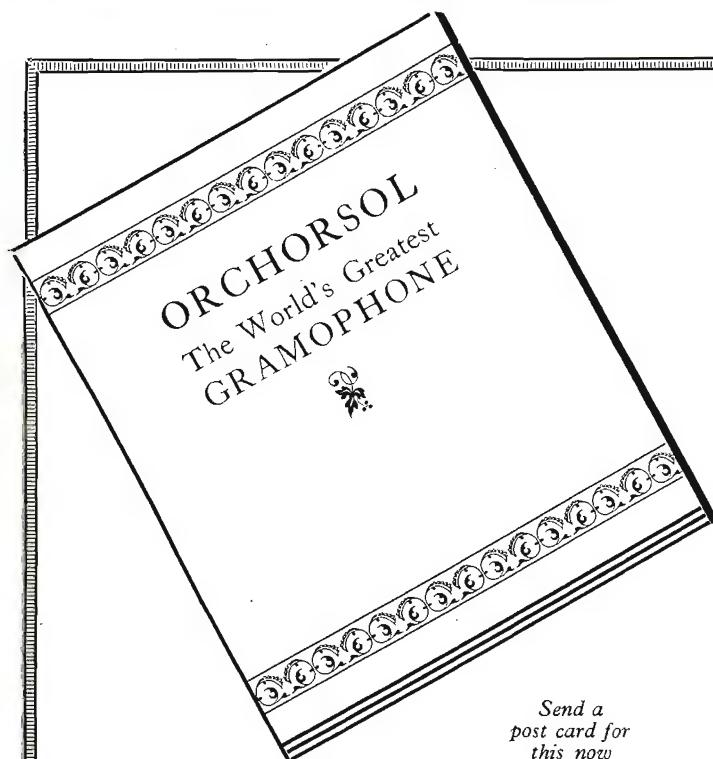
Polydor.—Breaks in the *Surprise Symphony* (Philharmonia): Side 1, page 10, bar 108 (end of Exposition); side 2, end of first movement; side 3, end of page 27; side 4, end of second movement; side 5, end of Minuet; side 6, end of symphony. Recorded in full.

A point about labelling that has cropped up before. The symphony begins with the slow introduction that Haydn so frequently employs in his later works. (Compare, for similarity of style, this one with the opening of the *Oxford Symphony*. The latter is recorded by Vocalion.) This *Adagio* section is only seventeen bars long, but the sides of the first record are labelled respectively "Adagio cantabile, I part" and "Adagio cantabile, II part." Also, the last movement is labelled "Adagio di molto," instead of "Allegro di molto."

My colleague, N. P., reviewed the Parlophone records of this work on page 385 of the issue of March, 1925.

The *Vivace assai* of the first movement is taken rather slowly, and there is a little blasting in the lower strings on the Columbia instrument; it is very slight on the H.M.V. Surface noise is fairly considerable. Mr. Blech stresses the flowing, urbane side of the music. The instruments are all clearly heard (old recording method). I like the pleasant expansiveness in the reading, but I think Haydn must have meant the movement to go faster than this. *Vivace assai* is a very lively direction indeed.

In the variations there is not sufficient distinction between *p* and *ff*. Otherwise these happy, simple-minded treatments come off very neatly. There is a good body of colour in the tone. The orchestration of the symphony includes no clarinets or trombones. We have, not the earliest symphonic orchestra (strings with a pair of wood-wind and a pair of brass), but a refinement of the maturer orchestra—practically the same organisation that Mozart employed for the *Jupiter*, the three wood-winds in pairs (flutes,



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oboes, bassoons), with the two pairs of brass (trumpets and horns), drums and strings. (*Jupiter* has only one flute.) 'Cellos and double basses still play from the same part (though Haydn did let his D.B.'s into the Promised Land of independent life at times), and the bassoons, though they often join the lowest stringed instruments, play about a fair amount in their own field, with their wind-relatives.

Polydor takes the Minuet faster than does Parlophone. As it is marked *Allegro molto*, that is quite in order. The playing is lusty, and the recording (apart from the slight blasting that my discs, at any rate, give) is just a trifle heavy, perhaps, though sound and bright.

In the last movement Parlophone was a shade too deliberate. Polydor more nearly approaches the *Allegro di molto* speed. This movement is a brave bit of the maturest Haydn, extremely interesting in itself, and an excellent example to compare with a similar movement in, say, the last three Mozarts. It has not quite the abounding concentrated dramatic life of the G minor and the *Jupiter* (I doubt if Haydn ever achieved such marvels of energy and growth as these last works of his contemporary exhibit—though I know that is a very arguable opinion); but it is one of Haydn's best things—clean-drawn and economical, moving surely to its appointed repetitions, yet maintaining a variety of interest and detail that keeps us listening keenly all the time. Those sudden modulations of Haydn are very refreshing, and delightfully characteristic (there is a striking one near the end—bar 234, page 55).

The inner strings in the Polydor performance are rather notably clear and strong. I like the interpretation (except in the matter of the first movement's speed).

Parlophone.—Mozart's *Jupiter* was annotated in THE GRAMOPHONE in January of last year (H.M.V.'s records).

Breaks (Eulenburg): Side 1, page 15, bar 9 (bar 161); side 2, end of first movement; side 3, page 37, bar 8 (bar 60 of the movement); side 4, end of slow movement; side 5, end of Minuet; side 6, last movement, page 66, bar 7; side 7, end.

Who called this *Jupiter*? Grove thinks a Philharmonic programme of 1845 first contained the name. No one god is sufficient for this amazing combination of all the powers of the musician's mind. A whole Olympus of gods is needed to name it justly. And all this wrought within the space of fifteen days, hard after the G minor and the E flat!

My H.M.V. records were lent, and have not yet come back, so I cannot usefully compare this recording with them.

This is a strong, virile performance. Upper strings are a little too powerful for wood-wind, and rarely achieve a *piano*. Of this one has most frequently to complain in orchestral records. Are the players afraid to go below a certain level of softness, for fear of not "coming through"? It would appear so.

There are one or two slips in intonation, notably at the start of page 26 (bars 272 and 3).

I find the slow movement somewhat loud, again—a little shrill in speech, and lacking in mystery and impressiveness. The lower strings are not quite strong enough in side 4 to make their rapid passages tell sufficiently (though the H.M.V. instrument makes a little more of them than does the Columbia).

The Finale is brisk and martial, but not big enough. The wood-wind on page 56 is faint. The basses want weight behind those Jovian bolts they hurl.

The performance is good value for money, though a little coarse-fibred, I feel.

The *Idomeneus Overture* is a good clear-cut bit of work. The opera did not take well (I believe it has never been performed in this country), but its overture is well worth hearing. There is a martial ring in it, befitting the high estate of Idomeneus, King of Crete.

The *Martha Overture* is crisply played, but I find the inner parts a little pale in soft passages. Almost certainly Flotow has something to do with that. This music is scarcely worth remembering and recording, when so many better things in every way are waiting to be done. One rather appealing tune it has—heard on the first side. How vulgar is the orchestration in its repetition!

The *Suite Orientale* is like all its class-mates—of the cinema, cinematic. The capable Lorand Orchestra "puts it over" as effectively as everything it handles. The diversified and quite effective orchestration is the best part of it.

His Master's Voice.—The *Fire Music* is a fine piece of work in which the new string tone troubles one less than formerly. The magnificent music has been worthily recorded, as far as ever the present resources allow—and that is really far indeed, compared with resources of the old days. The extract begins at page 1005

of the Eulenburg miniature score of the opera. *Siegfried's Journey* is another notable reproduction that does great credit to all concerned. Siegfried has won through the fire and has awakened Brynhilda. Soon we hear the broad theme that is a dignified metamorphosis of his boyish horn-call in *Siegfried*. After the daybreak music (based on a motive of Brynhilda's love—the theme with a turn on its first note, then an upward leap), comes the horn-call in its primitive form, as the hero starts on his journey (this comes near the end of the first side). At the beginning of the second side a three-time version of a down-stepping melody very prominent in the concluding portion of *Siegfried* appears, and the joyful music that immediately follows is based on this and on the horn theme with Loge's motive of fire. Several "Rhine" motives are heard—those of the Gold and the Ring—and the scene ends in a mood that somewhat prepares us for the tragic happenings that are to follow Siegfried's journey to the Hall of the Gibichungs, on the Rhine.

The first of the attractive little Grieg pieces seems just a little portentous, in this recording. It is sonorous—a trifle too heavily so for so slight a piece, I feel. The others are capitally recorded, with plenty of vivid colour, such as Grieg needs.

The *Dwarfs' March* is particularly good here. Listening to the *Nocturne* it is interesting to think how Grieg was influenced by the earlier "classics" of his century and how many composers since his day have in turn been influenced by him. But few of the youngsters brought with them so charming a fancy and so original an idiom as Grieg's. Columbia has already done this suite in pre-electric days. The new process is well worth hearing in this case, and produces a better result.

Of the two *Merry Wives* I think H.M.V.'s performance is slightly the more brilliant, though perhaps some of the Columbia detail is a trifle cleaner. There is little to choose between the recordings, both of which are good.

Velvet Face.—Yet another *Siegfried Idyll*! This is a workmanlike performance, just lacking the silky sheen of the best recordings, and the touch of intimacy that casts such a glow over the work in our hearts. The balance of weight is not altogether ideal, and the interplay of the light and shade are scarcely subtle enough. Resiliency and fine polish, subtlety, and poetry are what we want in this music, and this recording gives us just the flesh and blood of music, soberly clad, and nothing more. The work was annotated in June last (page 34) and another recording was reviewed in July (page 88).

Vocalion.—Breaks in the concerto: Side 1, end of page 19; side 2, page 43, bar 7; side 3, page 69, bar 1; side 4, end of page 92; side 5, end of first movement; side 6, page 124, bar 6; side 7, page 145, bar 3; side 8, end of the work.

There is one cut, from page 166, last bar, to page 175, bar 4. Nothing of importance is lost. The concerto is not very excitingly played. It does not sound flamboyant enough. Sapelnikoff plays soberly, and so does the orchestra. His loudest tone does not dominate, but neither does it annoy. In the middle range (in such quiet passages as that he has alone, on page 33) his tone does not sing well. I wish both soloists and orchestras would lay their tone-levels more carefully before starting and keep to them. It is the same with singers. Their *dim.* and *cresc.*, and all their doings are much less effective than they ought to be, simply because they won't lay levels and keep to them, that is, decide what are going to be their *ppp*, *pp*, *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*, and *fff* levels (to take only eight) in any given piece. The most general fault (shown in the orchestral playing in this concerto) is the unwillingness to play softly enough. If one can get a really good meaty soft tone—truly *piano*—the range of expansion is so much greater.

The reproduction of piano tone is quite good here and the whole of the playing is careful. There is some very nice wood-wind tone, but really the performance is too gentlemanly.

Ravel, in paying tribute to a great Frenchman of an earlier day (who in his time wrote a "Tombeau" also—for Corelli), does not wax elegiac. He simply writes a few little pieces having the general formal cast of his predecessor's dance-movements, and pays his respects by filling the mould of form with something quite recognisably his own.

If his tribute is not, on the whole, very striking, it has individuality. There are some who might suggest, from the harmony of the *Forlana*, that Ravel was delicately "cocking a snook" at Couperin; but it is only his way of expressing himself, and there is nothing in the suite to make one wish that Couperin had written a *Tombeau de Ravel* instead of Ravel's doing the job for Couperin.

There were originally six pieces in the set—Prelude, Fugue, Forlana, Rigaudon, Minuet, and Toccata. The orchestral version excludes the Toccata and Fugue and ends with the lively Rigaudon.

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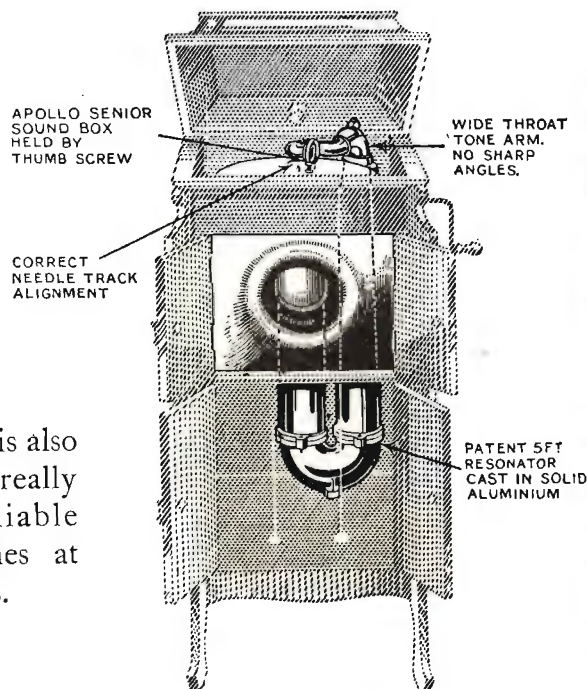
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CRAIES & STAVRIDIS,

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The Forlana is an Italian dance, a favourite, Grove tells us, of Venetian gondoliers. I like the treatment of this clearly-recorded music very much. (The other two pieces of the orchestral suite have already appeared on record D.02139).

How much some of our youngest writers owe to Ravel! Vaughan Williams in earlier days wrote at times much in his manner, and Goossens learned much from him. Compare, for instance, this Forlana with the *Gargoyle* movement in the English composer's *Kaleidoscope*.

Columbia.—Grieg: The *Allegro marcato* (spelt *marcata* on my copy) is rather lacking in string clarity of detail. The middle section is more effective when taken a little slower. The second piece is on the slow side. It drags and lacks its touch of dainty *insouciance*. Mr. Schneevoigt is not a subtle conductor, I am afraid. I remember him in the flesh.

Piece No. 3 has the funny slip *Aller marcia* for *Alla marcia*. Was this taken down from word of mouth? This piece, too, is stodgy. The last piece stands the heavy treatment best. The tone throughout is well reproduced. I suppose, by the way, that pianist readers know these pieces as piano duets (published by Augener)? They can be made very piquant and effective in that form.

The Wolf-Ferrari extracts represent a very good standard of playing and reproduction. These are attractive bits of light music.

Aco.—Delibes is always happy in ballet music. The Grosvenor Players are much more at home here than in the *Fingal's Cave Overture* of last month. Both this record and their other are good half-crowns' worth of sweetstuff. The Boccherini *Minuet* is just a trifle fast, I think, for its grace to exhale freely. It could be made more winsome. The Delibes record is.

Beltona.—This *Fingal's Cave* is better than last month's, but is rather rough and not too well balanced in places. It is quite decent value for money, though. K. K.

OPERATIC

PETER DAWSON (bass-baritone).—Prologue, Parts 1 and 2, *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo). H.M.V., C.1259, 12in., 4s. 6d.

RICHARD MAYR (bass).—Höre du alter Mantel from *Bohème* (Puccini) and So schwärmet Jugend from *Barbier von Bagdad* (Cornelius). Polydor 62391, 10in., 4s. 6d.

JOSEPH SCHWARTZ (baritone).—Blick' ich umher and Lied an den Ahenstern from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner). Polydor 72674, 12in., 6s. 9d.

ALFRED JERGER (bass) and **EMMY BETTENDORF** (soprano).—Guten Abend and Hat einst ein Weib from *Die Meistersinger* (Wagner). Parlo. E.10443, 12in., 4s. 6d.

LAURITZ MELCHIOR (tenor).—Das der mein Vater nicht ist and Du holdes Vöglein from *Siegfried* (Wagner). Parlo. E.10442, 12in., 4s. 6d.

EMMY BETTENDORF (soprano).—Habañera and Card Scene from *Carmen* (Bizet). Parlo. E.10441, 12in., 4s. 6d.

JOHN PERRY (tenor).—The Prize Song from *Die Meistersinger* (Wagner) and Your tiny hand is frozen from *Bohème* (Puccini). V.F. 531, 12in., 4s.

TATIANA MAKUSHINA (soprano).—Elizabeth's Prayer from *Tannhäuser* and Isolde's Liebestod from *Tristan und Isolde* (Wagner). V.F.630, 12in., 4s.

LUELLA PAIKIN (soprano).—Voi che sapete from *Figaro* (Mozart) and Ah! lo so from *The Magic Flute* (Mozart). Voc. A.0263, 12in., 5s. 6d.

CLARA SERENA (contralto).—O don fatale from *Don Carlos* (Verdi) and Voce di donna o d'angelo and La Gioconda (Ponchielli). Voc. K.05227, 12in., 4s. 6d.

MAARTJE OFFERS (contralto).—Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix and Amour, viens aider from *Samson et Dalila* (Saint-Saëns). H.M.V., D.B.912, 12in., 8s. 6d.

BIANCA SCACCIATI (soprano).—Voi lo sapete from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni) and Vissi d'arte from *La Tosca* (Puccini). Col. D.1542, 10in., 4s. 6d.

Tacea la notte placida and D'Amor sull'ali rosee from *Trovatore* (Verdi). Col. D.1543, 10in., 4s. 6d.

FRANCESCO MERLI (tenor).—Dai campi dai prati and Giunto sul passo estremo from *Mefistofele* (Boito). Col. D.1545, 10in., 4s. 6d.).

Celeste Aida from *Aida* (Verdi) and Cielo e mar from *La Gioconda* (Ponchielli). Col. D.1546, 10in., 4s. 6d.

FRANK MULLINGS (tenor) and **NORMAN ALLIN** (bass).—Love and War and Gendarmes' Duet from *Geneviève de Brabant*. Col. L.1735, 12in., 6s. 6d.

Peter Dawson.—An earlier record of the *Prologue* to *Pagliacci* by this singer was reviewed by me in an article on Leoncavallo's opera which appeared in September, 1924. The present one, which takes its place, corrects what few defects I then pointed out; it also embodies a far superior example of up-to-date recording, the vocal tone being marvellously close to nature, while the distinctive qualities of the instruments in the accompaniment come out with similar truthfulness. I will not say that Mr. Dawson has sung the *Prologue* better than before, for he sang it very well then, nor do I think he could materially improve upon his reading of it. I still feel, however, that he might assimilate his vowel tones a little more neatly and that he need not sound every final "y" as though it were written "es"—i.e., "storee," "mem'ree," etc.

Richard Mayr.—The popular German bass whom we know best as the Baron Ochs of *Der Rosenkavalier* (the opera, not the film), will be displaying his versatility in more than one part during the coming season at Covent Garden. For the Polydor he has recently sung on a 10in. disc a couple of excerpts that form an excellent contrast—one the touching farewell which Colline addresses to the beloved garment that he is about to pawn; the other, a clever air concerning love from Cornelius's opera, *The Barber of Bagdad*. The latter, being genuinely comic, with its constant repetition of the word "Liebe" on the lower bass octave, furnishes, as I say, an effective contrast to the pathetic page of Puccini, while both are quite admirably interpreted.

Joseph Schwartz.—Here we have Wolfram's familiar airs from *Tannhäuser*, sung in German and in the traditional Teutonic fashion by the experienced baritone who was giving recitals in London not very long ago. He has a fine voice, is a thorough master of Wagnerian methods, and succeeds, especially in the upper register, in imparting considerable grace and vibrant timbre to the melody of the *Star of Eve*. The harp is prominent, of course, but on the whole, the orchestral accompaniment sounds rather thin; nor can I speak very highly of the recording, which sounds to me blurred and frequently unsteady.

Alfred Jerger and *Emmy Bettendorf*.—All lovers of the scene between Hans Sachs and Ev'chen in the second act of *Die Meistersinger*—one of the most remarkable for its fine imaginative feeling and subtlety in the whole opera—will be ready to welcome so artistic a rendering as the one here presented. There is no blending of voices in this duet; it is merely a conversation full of smart repartee set to snatches of gracious melody with a background of suggestive orchestral motives. The latter, unfortunately, is not on a level with the smoothness and adequacy of the singing. Nevertheless, it is not poor enough to offend, and the ear finds sufficient to enjoy in the two voices, which are just perfectly fitted for what they have to do. Not a note is cut, yet the two sides of the large disc suffice to take in the whole duet.

Lauritz Melchior.—This capable tenor sang Siegmund in the second cycle of the *Ring* at Covent Garden two years ago, and he will again be doing one of the great Wagner rôles this month. His latest Parlophone record indicates that he will probably show himself to be an exceptionally good Siegfried. The colloquy with the Waldvogel embodies some very difficult music for the singer and demands some marked varieties of style. Melchior meets every requirement with the alertness and spirit of an artist who knows every point there is to be made. His *Sprechgesang* may at times be a trifle rough and jerky, but this is evidently intentional, for his voice can be sweet and musical enough when he likes, as, for instance, in the beautiful passage, "Wie sah meine Mutter wohl aus," which is sung with exquisitely tender feeling. The violins execute the flowing "forest murmurs" tolerably well, but the instrumentation as a whole does not come out so clearly and neatly as it ought.

Emmy Bettendorf.—The *Habañera* from *Carmen* lies rather low for this gifted soprano and she takes it at a slower tempo than Bizet intended, besides making it too serious, without *insouciance* or a touch of hidden devilry. The *Card Scene* suits her better; there she keeps her tone delightfully steady and assumes with it the right dramatic and significant character. Altogether, the record is interesting, and one accepts the German text without question, because the artist pronounces it so musically.

John Perry.—A bright penetrating tone of true tenor quality, a free, manly style, and a natural feeling for rhythm impart a welcome liveness to the singing of this artist. But in the use of



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| G 15938 | The Carpet (Wilfred Sanderson). Orch. Acc. | John Thorne (Baritone) |
| | The Song of the North Wind (Harold Head). Orch. Acc. | |
| G 15939 | Nightfall at Sea. "Sea Echoes" (Montague F. Phillips). Piano Acc. | Leonard Gowings (Tenor) |
| | Sally in our Alley (Henry Carey). Piano Acc. | |

INSTRUMENTAL.

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| | Pal of my Cradle Days (Waltz) (Montgomery-Piantadosi). Piano Acc. | |
| G 15941 | Savoy Scottish Medley (arr. Debroy Somers). Piano Acc. Tony Fones | Mario de Pietro (Mandoline) |
| | Savoy Irish Medley (arr. Debroy Somers). Piano Acc. Tony Fones | |
| G 15942 | Dreamy Nights in Honolulu (Waltz) (Hampton). Hawaiian Guitars | Palala's Hawaiians |
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| | No. 1—Scafi Dance. No. 4—Circassian Dance. | |
| G 15944 | The Clock is Playing (Pierre Blaauw) | The Grosvenor Salon Orchestra |
| | Menuet (Boccherini) | |
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| | (c) The Blackman. | |
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| | Old fashioned Love (Mack-Johnson). Orch. Acc. | |
| G 15949 | Behind the Clouds (Davis-de Sylva). Orch. Acc. | Johnson Brothers |
| | What's to become of me ? (Shapiro). Orch. Acc. | Jack Johnson |
| G 15950 | Mignonette (Nicholls). Orch. Acc. | Billy Desmond |
| | You ought to know (Sissle-Blake). Orch. Acc. | |
| G 15951 | What's the good of leaving the dear old home (Russell-McGhee-King). Orch. Acc. | Fred Gibson |
| | In Sweet Onion Time (Duncan Sisters-Coslow). Orch. Acc. | |
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| G 15953 | Picador (Nicholls) Spanish One-step with vocal refrain | Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra |
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| G 15954 | Oh, Lady be Good (Gershwin). Fox Trot. Intro.: So am I. From "Lady be Good" | Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra |
| | Oh ! that Sweetie of Mine (Berry-Milne-Silver). Fox Trot with vocal refrain | |
| G 15913 | Jalousie (Jealousy) (Jacob Gade). Tango | Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra |
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his breath-pressure he is more powerful than discriminating, and it prevents his obtaining effects of colour or contrast. He must acquire refinement both in his singing and his diction—especially the latter. It is not “refaned” to put the accent on the last syllable in “moment” or in “maiden,” or even in “frozen.” Otherwise her “tinee hand” is quite acceptable.

Tatiana Makushina.—The delivery of *Elizabeth's Prayer* requires more repose, greater steadiness of vocal line, than I find here. In *Isolde's Liebestod* the vocalist, thanks to her clever declamation and careful phrasing, gets away, so to speak, with her main defect little noticed. She sings both pieces in German, and, on the whole, quite artistically. These V.F. records are well made, but the orchestra should stand out more clearly.

Luella Paikin.—It is given to few artists, however gifted, to sing Mozart really well, be it on the stage, the concert platform, or the gramophone; and of these three perhaps the most difficult is the gramophone. Without being too critical, therefore, I may fairly remind Miss Paikin that it does not do to sing *Voi che sapete* with a *voix blanche* or *Ah! lo so* with a timbre of haunting misery that induces persistent flatness. Both defects are due in a measure to her faulty attack and feeble adjustment in the medium register. The head notes suffer less and are of a pretty quality, though surely it ought not to be necessary to take so many breaths.

Clara Serena.—Here is a mezzo-contralto with a fine voice who makes too little use of her chest tone and of the muscles that regulate breath-control. The medium is pushed down too far; which is nearly as bad as taking the chest quality too high. On the other hand, Miss Serena infuses a good deal of dramatic energy into her style and evidently knows her Verdi and Ponchielli airs well. But with such a pretty Italian name, it is not a little strange that her Italian vowels should be so redolent of Cockaigne! The recording in each case is excellent.

Maartje Offers.—The only serious fault in these two familiar excerpts from *Samson et Dalila* is that apparent paradox, a steady tremolo. Frankly, it detracts appreciably from the charm of a sympathetic voice (lovely low notes) and capital singing. One also misses in *Amour, viens aider*, the sense of gloating assurance that should characterise Dalila's appeal to her love-god. It sounds too agitated and anxious. Yet the singer's style is unimpeachable, and her enunciation is that of a well-trained, intelligent artist. The difficult accompaniment to *Mon cœur s'ouvre* is well played, while the record itself is generally beyond reproach.

Bianca Scacciati.—This name is, I think, new here. It belongs to a typical Italian soprano of the modern school—voice inclined to be pinched and tremulous whenever vigour and pressure are employed. Evidently Signora Scacciati is intelligent, and it is a pity her tone is not so musical as she seems to be herself. At the same time one also feels that her readings of the hackneyed *Trovatore* airs are not quite in accordance with tradition; the tempi are dragged, the pauses too lengthy. The best of the four efforts is the *romanza* from *Cavalleria*.

Francesco Merli.—A robust tenor of undoubted merit; has a splendid voice, with only a slight occasional vibrato, and phrases with dignity as well as dramatic sentiment. His scale mounts evenly and comfortably to the B flat which he requires in both the airs from *Aida* and *Gioconda*, and he is always in tune. The examples from *Mefistofele*, quite in another vein, are equally to be commended, though the *Dai campi* is rather too declamatory and forceful for a peaceful Faust at Eastertide.

Frank Mullings and **Norman Allin.**—Making this disc must have been great fun. Fancy the opportunities for sheer caricature in these old duets! Well, neither singer has lost a chance anywhere, and the result is distinctly amusing.

HERMAN KLEIN.

INSTRUMENTAL

VIOLIN.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.A.758 (10in., 6s.).—**Jacques Thibaud**: *Tambourin* (Leclaire-Kreisler) and *Golliwog's Cake-walk* (Debussy).

B.2289 (10in., 3s.).—**Marjorie Hayward**: *Poupée Valsante* (Poldini) and *Snowy-Breasted Pearl* (Robinson).

PARLOPHONE.

E.10440 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Tossy Spiwakowsky**: *Slavonic Dances, Nos. 2 and 3* (Dvorák-Kreisler).

POLYDOR.

65987 (12in., 6s. 9d.).—**Vasa Prihoda**: *I Palpiti* (Paganini).

VOCALION.

K.05226 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Adila Fachiri**: *Scènes de la Czárda* (Hubay) and *Concerto in A minor* (Vivaldi-Nachèz).

I have seen some of the lists sent in by candidates for the prize offered by THE GRAMOPHONE for hitherto unrecorded short violin pieces, and my pity for the violinists has increased. The massed industry, knowledge, and ingenuity of the readers of this magazine have been brought to bear on the subject, and how wretched is the harvest reaped! It is clearly futile for us to ask the companies and their artists for more original violin music when so little is in existence and the remedy would seem to lie with the composers. While we are waiting for them to “deliver the goods” there seems nothing for it but to accept the present custom of recording “arrangements” only begging those concerned to exercise their discretion in what they arrange and how they arrange it. And surely there must be sonatas and other major works, unsuitable for reproduction in full, from which short movements might be profitably extracted.

Poupée Valsante, one of Marjorie Hayward's pieces this month, is one of those suggested for recording by a competitor for THE GRAMOPHONE prize. She plays it well, and the balance of the two instruments is good, though the new process results in rather a hard tone at the beginning. The other piece seems to me to have “come off” better, though the double stopping in a high register tries the resources of the recording room a little too far. Thibaud, the other H.M.V. violinist, gives a fanciful rendering of the *Tambourin*, and here, I think, the new recording scores a distinct success, the tone of the instrument having little of that shrill quality that has troubled us so often of late; it returns, however, in the *Golliwog's Cake Walk*, though the character of the music makes it almost an acquisition for once. But this piece does not strike me as effective in the arrangement Thibaud uses, and the rendering, very good on the whole, suffers once or twice from a lack of unanimity between piano and violin. My usually trustworthy instrument produced an excruciating sound in place of the final chord that Debussy wrote, but possibly the advance pressing is to blame.

The two records that gave me most pleasure were Spiwakowsky's and Adila Fachiri's. The former gives an excellent account of himself in two examples of light music whose charm has not yet been spoiled by familiarity, and the sound recording of the Parlophone Company preserves all the essential features of the original performance. Vocalion is no less successful with Adila Fachiri; the Vivaldi *Concerto* that she plays has plenty of tune and rhythm, while the Hubay piece is an example of a more modern style, full of fireworks, but much more interesting musically than most things of the kind. All concerned are to be congratulated here.

Vasa Prihoda is able to play Paganini, which is saying a good deal, though his tone struck me as rather thin. Possibly the recording must bear the blame for this defect: there are moments when the sound of the violin vanishes altogether and I cannot hold the performer responsible for that. Don't be misled by the innocent beginning of *I palpiti*; it palpitates all right later on, though somewhat spasmodically.

COLUMBIA.

VIOLA.

L.1731-2 (two 12in. records, 13s.).—**Lionel Tertis** and **William Murdoch**: *Sonata in C sharp minor, Op. 21* (Dohnanyi).

These records arrived rather late for review and I was not able to obtain a score. I am not familiar with the work, which was originally written for violin and piano, and I have only had time to hear it once, so I am not in a position to say much about it. It impressed me, however, very favourably, and I fancy that a more intimate acquaintance with it would increase my respect. The composer employs traditional methods both harmonic and architectural, but he brings enough originality to bear to prove that the old forms are by no means exhausted. The writing is effective and musicianly and both instruments have plenty to say. I am not sure that I enjoy very high notes on the viola even when it is Tertis who plays them, and I am quite certain that I should have liked a little more of the upper register of the piano. But in spite of these defects the records supply as good a specimen of the new recording as I have heard hitherto.

COLUMBIA.

'CELLO.

3922 (10in., 3s.).—**Antoni Sala**: *Tarantella* (Forino) and *Vito* (Popper).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.A.776 (10in., 6s.).—**Pablo Casals**: *Moment Musical* (Schubert) and *Le Cygne* (Saint-Saëns).

REGAL.

G.8548 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Ray Stannard: *Serenade* (W. H. Squire) and *Serenade* (Widor).

Casals' superb playing puts his record in a class by itself. Phrasing, rhythm, balance, are all just right, and the artistry of the interpretation will repay close study by others besides 'cellists. It is satisfactory to find that the new process of recording suits this splendid musician so well. The Schubert piece is an arrangement of the charming little work in F minor for piano (Op. 94, No. 3), and Casals has to play it twice to fill even a 10in. record! This is a pity; it is always easy to turn on a gramophone record a second time if one wants to, and I believe most of us would prefer that the last inch or two of such expensive records should be filled by something fresh, however slight.

The excellence of the recording is the most notable feature about Sala's record. The music itself is rather slight for all its vivacity, and the 'cellist has rather a thin tone though his technique seems adequate for anything. Ray Stannard seems to be a sensitive player, but his record cannot be said to amount to much, either as music or as a test of his powers. Still, the two *Serenades* he gives us are quite innocuous and they can be recommended to those who like this kind of thing, for the recording is well done, the surface is good, and the price is low.

PIANO.

BELTONA.

6044 (10in., 3s.).—Ethel Attwood: *Waltz in G flat* (Chopin) and *Nocturne in E flat* (Chopin).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.B.926 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Backhaus: *Liebesträume* (Liszt) and *Naila Waltz* (Delibes-Dohnanyi).

POLYDOR.

65699 (12in., 6s. 9d.).—Wilhelm Kempff: *Prelude and Fugue in C sharp* and *Prelude and Fugue in D* from *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier* (Bach).

REGAL.

G.8549 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Lilian Bryant: *The Bees' Wedding* and *Spring Song* (Mendelssohn).

It is rather unfortunate that Ethel Attwood's rendering of the Chopin *G flat Waltz* should appear only a month after a record of the same piece by Pachmann. She cannot, of course, afford this comparison, but at the same time she gives us some good playing, especially in the middle section. Her treatment of the left-hand part in the *Nocturne* suggests hurry and her *rubato* is not always well managed, but when all is said and done she supplies quite a pleasing version of two famous pieces at a low price.

Backhaus is rather more faithful to the text of the *Liebestraum* (again called "*Liebestäume*" on my advance pressing) than was Godowsky last month, though even now we have, I think, a few notes too many. The general standard of his playing, both here and in the brilliant *Naila Waltz* is indeed a very high one, but the recording is a little disappointing. In the Liszt the melody notes after the first *cadenza* (and right on to the end) sounded curiously dead on my machine and there was an epidemic of that nasty "buzz" that we all dislike so much. The same faults were noticeable in the waltz, although, happily, not so often. This record displaces D. 788.

Wilhelm Kempff's treatment of two of the "forty-eight" is thoroughly sound in spite of some lapses in detail, such as a slip of the fingers in bar 22 of the *C sharp Fugue*. Possibly his contrasts in the D major are too violent and it is certainly unfortunate that in *pianissimo* the sound should occasionally fade into inaudibility. But these are trifles, to set against the sweetness of the tone and the solid merit of a record of great music that is sure to find favour with lovers of John Sebastian. The two works are complete, by the way; "part I," on the label refers, apparently, to the fact that the Preludes and Fugues are from the first book of the "forty-eight."

Lilian Bryant's playing is clean if not very imaginative. I should have less hesitation in recommending her record were it not for that horrid "buzz" that appeared again here and spoilt the effect of even a delicate *staccato*. And *The Bees' Wedding* has such a lot of *staccato*!

ORGAN.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

E.415 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Reginald Goss-Custard: *The Question and The Answer* (Wolstenholme).

C.1258 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Herbert Dawson: *Marche Pontificale* (Widor) and *Prayer and Cradle Song* (Guilmant).

The recording of all these pieces is the only first-rate thing about them; everything else is distinctly second-rate (not third-rate, be it understood), though I find I like Goss-Custard's playing better than Herbert Dawson's. Both performers make very free use of the reeds which do not, to my thinking, sound nearly so well on the gramophone as the diapasons, and Herbert Dawson goes in for the tremulant as well, an effect that sounds even more weakly sentimental on a record than in a church. As to the music the *Marche Pontificale* is a popular piece with organists, though I have never succeeded in extracting a thrill from it. The other items exasperate me, I am afraid. They are quite respectable—too respectable! I feel that these polite expressions of a decently-veiled tenderness for nothing in particular are unworthy of the dignity of the most dignified of all instruments. P. L.

[Note.—I fancy that P. L.'s references to the recording should be read with caution. It looks as if his machine was out of order.—LONDON ED.]

CHORAL RECORDS

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—

Westminster Abbey Special Choir (recorded in Westminster Abbey, London) conducted by S. N. Nicholson: *Gloria in Excelsis* (Weelkes) and *Motet, Never weather-beaten sail* (C. H. H. Parry); *We bow our heads* (final chorus of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*) (two parts), with organ accompaniment by O. H. Peasgood. D.1083 and D.1084 (two 12in., 6s. 6d. each).

In Dulci Jubilo (arr. Pearsall) (two parts). E.419 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

COLUMBIA.

Don Cossacks Choir (singing in Russian) conducted by Serge Jaroff: *Song of the Volga Boatmen* (Russian folk-song) and *Monotonously rings the little bell* (Russian folk-song, arr. Jaroff). 9085 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Clearly, all things are now possible in choral recording. There is practically nothing to be said about the recording of the *Westminster Abbey Special Choir*. Listening to these three records is to me exactly the same as hearing the choir in the Abbey. Possibly Mr. Nicholson himself may criticise the reproduction; at all events, that is far beyond my power. There is one important and interesting point to mention: On the machine on which I have played these records (see the head of the song reviews) it is the Columbia soft-tone needle with which is so faithfully reproduced the choir's singing as I have heard it; the medium-tone needle possibly adds a little clarity, but also adds a perceptible touch of that hardness to which this new process tends. If one wished to improve on the original, it might be useful to place a separate microphone nearer the organ, which is hardly strong enough. I don't know how this could be managed, as the organ loft itself would probably (without some mechanical device) be too close quarters. This is merely the one thought that suggests itself; there may be nothing in it. I wish I could agree with the writer of H.M.V.'s leaflet that the magnificent Weelkes *Gloria* is "probably the finest record of the set." The *Gloria* is one of the finest examples of all the music of what (as he says) is probably the greatest group of composers the world has yet known. But it is also a very great test, and the choir has not been at its very best in it. In this especially one notices that the tenors are very fine, the basses perhaps as good, the altos a wee bit weak, and the boys occasionally a little ragged and out of tune. But in the final chorus of the *St. Matthew Passion* I feel they provide about the most valuable record of any description that I have yet heard. (One does not feel any great need of orchestral accompaniment here.) The old carol, *In dulci jubilo*, is good, but surely taken very slowly? If any carol should remind us of its dance element surely this one should.

I have never heard the *Don Cossacks Choir*, but they are obviously well recorded here. The famous *Volga Boatmen's Song* is remarkable in two ways. First, it really does emerge from nothing, and to nothing it returns; secondly, the choir never seems to settle down to a definite intonation. The bell song is very beautiful—not the stunt one might expect. Much might be said of it. It provides an object-lesson in choral *crescendo*. It has as soloist a wonderful male alto. I don't think he is a natural alto, but he sounds far less unnatural than most of his species. C. M. C.



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SONGS

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

- The English Singers (unaccompanied mixed sextet): The dark-eyed sailor (folk-song, arr. Vaughan Williams) and Sing we at pleasure (Weelkes). E.422 (10in., 4s. 6d.).
- Edna Thornton (contralto): Mad Bess (Purcell) and An old garden (Hope Temple). D.1086 (12in., 6s. 6d.).
- Sir Harry Lauder (baritone) with orchestra: The Road to the Isles (M. Kennedy-Fraser's Songs of the Hebrides) and Keep right on to the end of the road (H. Lauder). D.1085 (12in., 6s. 6d.).
- Robert Radford (bass): Father O'Flynn (arr. C. V. Stanford) and Glorious Devon (Edward German). E.420 (10in., 4s. 6d.).
- Elsie Suddaby (soprano): Shepherd's cradle song (Somervell) and Charming Chloe (Edward German). E.421 (10in., 4s. 6d.).
- Harry Dearth (bass): High Barbaree and A jug of this (arr. Howard Carr). E.418 (10in., 4s. 6d.).
- Peter Dawson (bass-baritone): She is far from the land (Lambert) and Love, could I only tell thee (Capel). B.2238 (10in., 3s.).

POLYDOR.

- Maria Olszewska (contralto) with orchestra: Schmerzen (Grief) and Träume (Dreams), Nos. 4 and 5 of Five Poems (Wagner). 72778 (12in., 6s. 9d.).
- Sigrid Onegin (contralto) with organ and strings: Cantata con stromenti, Arioso, Dank sei Dir, Herr (Handel) and Trauungs-gesang, Wo du hingehst (Hildach). 72738 (12in., 6s. 9d.).
- Sigrid Onegin (with piano): Menuet d'Exaudet and Jeunes fillettes (arr. Weckerlin). 70620 (10in., 5s.).

BRUNSWICK.

- Sigrid Onegin (contralto): Die Lotosblume (The Lotus Flower, Schumann) with orchestra, and Auf Flügeln des Gesanges (On Wings of Song, Mendelssohn) with piano and string quartet. 10213 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

ACTUELLE.

- Glyn Eastman (baritone) with orchestra: Droop not, young lover (Handel) and It is enough (Mendelssohn's Elijah). 15222 (12in., 3s. 6d.).
- Hardy Williamson (tenor) with orchestra: Comfort ye and Every valley (Handel's Messiah). 15221 (12in., 3s. 6d.).

PATHE.

- Hardy Williamson (tenor) with orchestra: Comfort ye and Every valley (Handel's Messiah). 5293 (12in., 3s. 6d.).

VOCALION.

- Kathleen Destournel (soprano) accompanied by Ivor Newton: I know where I'm goin', A Ballynure Ballad, and B. for Barney (Irish, arr. H. Hughes). X.9767 (10in., 3s.).
- Watecyn Watecyns (bass-baritone) with The Band of H.M. Welsh Guards under the direction of Lieut. Andrew Harris: Captain Morgan's War March (Forth to the Battle) and Land of my Fathers (traditional). X.9766 (10in., 3s.).
- Victor Carne (tenor) accompanied by Berkeley Mason: Serenade (Raff) and (with violin obbligato by S. Kutcher) Parted (Tosti). X.9765 (10in., 3s.).

ACO.

- Elsie Francis-Fisher (contralto): Cradle Song (Wiegenlied, Op. 49, No. 4, Brahms) and The Hazel Tree (Der Nussbaum, Op. 25, No. 3, Schumann). G.15937 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

BELTONE.

- Vera Devna (soprano): The Sandman (Sandmännchen, from Children's Folk-songs, No. 4—also known as The Little Dustman—Brahms) and To the Forest (Tchaikovsky). 6042 (10in., 3s.).
- Catherine Stewart (contralto): Bonnie George Campbell (Keel) and Turn ye to me (arr. Malcolm Lawson). 6041 (10in., 3s.).
- May Huxley (soprano): Lo! here the gentle lark (Bishop) with flute obbligato, and Il Bacio (Arditi). 7003 (12in., 4s. 6d.).
- Harry Brindle (bass) with orchestra: The Mighty Deep (Jude) and Bells of the Sea (Solman). 6043 (10in., 3s.).

COLUMBIA.

- Muriel Brunskill (contralto): The Erl King (Schubert) and The Enchantress (Hatton). 9088 (12in., 4s. 6d.).
- Dame Clara Butt (contralto): Shenandoah (Sea Shanty, arr. Sir R. R. Terry) and Little Fleur-de-lys (Easthope Martin). X.331 (10in., 6s.).
- Rex Palmer (baritone): Annie Laurie and Ye banks and braes (old Scottish airs). 3924 (10in., 3s.).
- Hubert Eisdell (tenor): The Garden of Sleep (de Lara) and All Souls' Day (Lassen). D.1539 (10in., 4s. 6d.).
- Seamus O'Doherty (tenor) with orchestra: Kitty of Coleraine (old Irish air) and The Rose of Tralee (C. W. Glover). 3923 (10in., 3s.).
- Doris Vane (soprano) with orchestra: There are fairies at the bottom of our garden (Liza Lehmann) and Goodbye (Paul). 3878 (10in., 3s.).
- (Machine used: H.M.V., new model, No. 161, with sound-box No. 4.)

Perhaps the most perfect vocal *ensemble* record yet issued is this latest of the *English Singers*. In all the three main factors—first the music, then performance and recording—it is literally excellent. I have heard the English Singers many times "in the flesh," but I do not remember anything better than this record gives. On diction it is difficult to pronounce a definite verdict. A month or two ago a new record of theirs showed that recording was not at fault, and that they themselves could improve, for every word was not unmistakably clear in solo passages, as it is in the best solo records. That cannot be said of this month's record. And it seems inherently impossible to combine perfect interpretation with absolute verbal clarity from beginning to end of such pieces as these. Anyhow, what tiny imperfections of this kind there may be do not greatly matter, since anyone who cares enough may buy copies of each piece at a few pence each. There is an old English Singers record of *Sing we at pleasure*, which sounds surprisingly good after the new one. But though the second recording is, perhaps, very slightly hard, it has gained in dynamics, clarity, vigour—has gained, in fact, just that final touch that makes it worth while.

Purcell is gradually making headway. If we could continue to have one Purcell record a month he would soon come into his own. *Mad Bess* is as fine a piece of dramatic music as exists. *Edna Thornton* declaims it with much feeling though she certainly does not "overact" it. She gets her words over finely. More smoothness in the more definitely melodic passages would have given grateful contrast. Here and there a note is noticeably flat. *An old garden* is a modern song of no great importance; those who like it will like this recording.

Sir Harry Lauder in one of the Songs of the Hebrides is something of a novelty to most of us. I cannot attempt to criticise it. All I can say is that very few singers indeed would not be left in the shade in competing with Sir Harry in such a song. I imagine most guid Scots will be thrilled; certainly mere Englishmen can but admire and enjoy. On the other hand, there seems to be nothing specially Scottish, nor very distinctive, in *Keep right on*.

Radford at his best in the splendid *Father O'Flynn* is irresistible. His diction in this patter song is an unqualified triumph, and one begins to wonder if *Radford* is after all an Irishman. German's song receives fullest possible justice. *Somervell's Cradle song* is one of the most beautiful, sensitive songs of its generation. *Elsie Suddaby* sings it very sympathetically, and her easy, flexible, lighter singing well suits *Charming Chloe*. Her vowels are still over-bright at times. *Harry Dearth's* big, resonant bass and *High Barbaree* are a good combination. Each is worthy of the other. *A jug of this* is a good song—a wee bit commonplace, perhaps. *Peter Dawson* once more flatters a couple of merely pretentious songs with his attention. Presumably many people will enjoy them.

Well might Wagner write of *Träume*: "It is more beautiful than anything I have done. My innermost being quivers when I hear it." It is, of course, the song which became incorporated in the love-scene of *Tristan*. *Olszewska* is one of the finest artists that Covent Garden has recently brought to us, and her record of *Schmerzen* and *Träume* is of very great value. There are few faults apart from surface noise (specially evident in the subdued *Träume*) and some cloudiness of the orchestra. (For full enjoyment of these songs one needs at least either good knowledge of German, or a copy of the edition published by Breitkopf and Härtel with Newman's English translation.)

Of *Sigrid Onegin's* three records (two Polydor, one Brunswick) I place the *Handel* first. (I have given the title exactly as found on

the label and in the catalogue. It is obviously an Arioso from some "Cantata with instruments," which I cannot identify. Also, I have had to guess the instruments in use.) This is a lovely, dignified melody with a strong likeness to the famous *Ombra mai fu* (Largo). Onegin's beautiful voice is used with the right breadth and suavity, though one could wish that singer and accompanists were better agreed as to the general rhythm. *Eugen Hildach* is a German baritone singer and professor. His *Trauuungsgesang* is pleasant enough, not greatly inspired—in fact, "Kapellmeister Musik," I think.

Onegin, German through and through, is vocally and temperamentally unsuited to *Weckerlin's* typical old French popular songs. On her *Brunswick* record the *Schumann* is no more than fair. Intonation, phrasing, and a tendency to blast are the chief faults. Her *Mendelssohn* favourite is better, but is sung rather near a dead level, with a few scoops, and the string quartet (surely not Mendelssohn's?) adds little of real value in the accompaniment.

In view of the letter on sapphire-cut records in the April number, it is interesting to have, this month, a record duplicated in *Pathé* and *Actuelle*. Both are very nearly equal to the best recording I have heard, excepting that they have a rather aggressively sharp tone. There is practically nothing to choose between the two; the *Pathé* has slightly better tone, and, I think, better surface.

Strangely, glancing quickly through the chief catalogues, I cannot find one record prior to this by *Glyn Eastman* of his characteristic Handel aria—one of Handel's most exhilarating, most masterly arias. The record deserves a place among the best of its class, and the price is low. Eastman has a solid, pleasing and useful voice, and has a good grasp of *Droop not*. His diction is not perfectly clear. His phrasing is well above the average. There might be a little more rise and fall, and a little more contrast in the middle section. The orchestra is excellent, except that the bass tends to lack tone in soft detached work. *It is enough* is not so good, and has big and important cuts; worst of all, the voice part comes to a sudden stop at the third phrase from the end.

Hardy Williamson seems well equal, vocally and in every way, to the famous *Messiah* Recitative and Aria, though I don't think he quite does himself justice. He gets a full, vibrating tone, which sometimes gets out of hand and becomes a real tremolo. Sometimes his tone quality is a bit unpleasant, sometimes he distorts his vowels for the sake of tone. Several other faults might be mentioned, yet the record remains good. Some first-class work should be expected from Williamson. The orchestra is good, except for the vice of bad string tone—but whose orchestration is this? It is neither Handel's nor Mozart's, nor, I think, Prout's nor Franz's. In *Every valley* there is brass at the opening and later, and bar 8 is given to clarinets alone, instead of Handel's violins (plus, according to Mozart, flutes and bassoons). In *Every valley* the following bars (inclusive) are cut: 4-7, 44-58, 76-82. There is, very occasionally, a little unsteadiness and blasting.

Herbert Hughes's arrangements of Irish airs are rapidly gaining deserved popularity. What with the music itself, and the singing of it, one finds it hard to criticise *Kathleen Destounel's* record of three of them. But many words need listening for. The delightful piano parts are splendidly played.

Two traditional Welsh airs, sung in Welsh by a Welshman, and accompanied by the Welsh Guards may surely be taken as representative of the race. *Captain Morgan's War March* and *Land of my Fathers* certainly ring true.

Tosti's Parted has probably hardly been better recorded. *Raff's Serenade* interests me rather more. But here is a voice and here is phrasing which should be reserved for the very best songs. *Victor Carne* is in the early days of his recording, I think, and must fly higher.

Those who watch for cheap but satisfactory records of good music will find *Elsie Francis-Fisher's* Aco well worth considering. The *Schumann* is not, I think, a first-rate song, and the performance may not be superlative, but there are no faults worth mentioning, except indistinct diction—and, with time and patience, I think one could make out every word (she sings English translations). The excellence of the pianist must not be overlooked.

Vera Devna is, I believe, a newcomer to *Beltona's*; she may provide some of their best vocal records. Judging by this one, she has at least a very fair voice, musical feeling, and good diction. She has made a good record of Brahms' lovely *Sandman* and a good Tchaikovsky. But she shows a persistent fault; phrasing and rhythmic continuity are rather badly broken.

Catherine Stewart's Scots record is more interesting than last month's, but still, I think, rather dull. The accompaniments are

largely responsible. *May Huxley* comes off as well as anybody in her competition with the flute. *Lo! here the genile lark*, in fact, as a piece of vocalisation, ranks with the best, and the same may be said of *Il Bacio*. The recording is almost impeccable, except for slight blasting. *Harry Brindle's* record is little more than a display of low notes.

The Enchantress could hardly vie with *The Erl King* as a song, but it is the more valuable of the two on *Muriel Brunskill's* fine record. There is not enough characterisation in the Schubert song. Moreover, it is surely not a happy choice for a contralto. Diction is generally very good, but (at any rate in Hatton's song) words are often swamped by the flood of tone in the louder, quicker passages.

Dame Clara Butt also has chosen a far-from-obviously woman's song in the well-known sea shanty. She is at her best in singing it. The record blasts very slightly on my machine.

The voice of *Uncle Rex* of 2LO should be familiar to most gramophonists. He sings the two Scottish airs with pleasing tone and much, yet not excessive, feeling.

de Lara's song is pleasant, rather derivative. *Eisdell* sings it with almost as much melancholy as he applies (perhaps appropriately) to *All Souls' Day*. There is a general tonal quality in the record of *Seamus O'Doherty* (who is new to me) which is objectionable. I think it is partly due to the recording, and this record is also an outstanding example of stridency of strings.

Doris Vane sings the *Lehmann* favourite with the right daintiness. Here, again, voice and strings are very reedy. *Good-bye* splendidly lives up to its sentiment, "let's part with a smile."

C. M. C.

BAND RECORDS

BELTONA.

949 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—*Beltona Military Band: Americana Suite* (*The Water Melon Fête* and *When Malindy Sings*) (Thurban).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

C.1256 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*Band of H.M. Royal Air Force: Troop, Les Huguenots* (Meyerbeer, arr. D. Godfrey) and *The Contemptibles March* (Stanley).

REGAL.

G.8546 and G.8547 (two 10in., 5s.).—*Silver Stars Band*, with pipes, fifes, drums, and Wembley Choir: *Wembley Military Tattoo, Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4*.

G.8562 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—*Besses o' th' Barn Band: After Sunset Intermezzo* (S. C. Jones) and *Distant Greeting March* (A. Doring).

ZONOPHONE.

A.298 (12in., 4s.).—*Black Diamonds Band: Trial by Jury Selection, Parts 1 and 2* (Sullivan).

ACO.

G.15945 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—*Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: The Dwellers in the Western World:—(a) The Red Man, (c) The Black Man* (Sousa).

G.15946 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—*Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: Invercargill March* (Lithgow) and *King's Escort March* (A. A. Ellis).

VOCALION.

K.05228 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*Band of H.M. Life Guards: The Merry Widow Selection, Parts 1 and 2* (Lehar).

The two movements from Thurban's *Americana Suite* are very popular numbers, but I should like the *Water-Melon Fête* better if it were not quite so descriptive. The singing of the bandsmen in the chorus sounds very feeble now that we are getting accustomed to modern choral records. *When Malindy sings* is played without so many effects and is all the better for it. The tubular bells do not come through very cleanly, but otherwise the recording is quite good.

The new record of the late Lieut. Dan Godfrey's arrangement of a chorus from Meyerbeer's opera, *Les Huguenots*, for use as a slow march in the ceremony of Trooping the Colours is very welcome. The balance is quite good, though not quite as good as in the *Old Contemptibles*, which occupies the reverse side. This march is very vigorous and crisply played.

The latest version of the *Wembley Military Tattoo* gives me no cause to revise the opinion expressed last month as to the superiority of that issued by the Columbia Company, though it is splendid value

for five shillings. The programme followed is practically the same as that of the Grenadier Guards with those irritating words of command and a few other details cut out to make it fit two ten-inch discs. The singing of the choir is rather badly out of tune in places, but this, possibly, makes the record more true to life!

Brass band records have been very scarce lately, and as the new one by the Besses o' th' Barn Band is the first made by the new process to be issued it is doubly welcome. *After Sunset* is a tuneful little piece while *Distant Greeting* is a good type of popular march. In both pieces the piano playing is delightful and the delicate sforzandos and smooth legato touch are marvels of technique. The new recording process is evidently going to be as successful with brass bands as with choirs and organs. The only fault in this case is a slight and occasional "woolliness" when the band is playing *forte*. I am looking forward to further issues, and in the meantime hope that the sale of this will be large enough to warrant the issue of others at an early date.

Before my superlatives are exhausted I must say something about the very best new process recording of a military band that I have yet heard. The *Trial by Jury Selection* is the first record by the Black Diamonds Band to be made by this process, and they obviously intend to seize the opportunity offered to add to their laurels. The playing and recording are just about equally good in *solo* and *tutti*, *piano* and *forte*, while the "true-to-liveness" of the individual instruments is marvellous. The euphonium and trombone have never been heard like this on a record before, and the other instruments are almost equally good. The surface is as silky and noiseless as could be desired and as, in addition, the music is bright and unhackneyed, this record should and deserves to be a "best seller."

Sousa is so famous for his marches that little of his other music, which includes musical comedies and comic operas, is ever heard in this country. These two characteristic sketches have never been recorded before in England so far as I know, though they are both issued on Edison re-creations played by the Edison Concert Band. The playing of a cymbal with a drumstick *piano* in *The Black Man*, which comes out so well in the re-creations, can hardly be heard in the new issue, but otherwise both playing and recording are good.

Invercargill and *King's Escort* are a brace of good marches. The former is very popular while the latter, with which I am not familiar, is equally bright and has a good piccolo part, advantage of which Corporal Brook takes to the full as usual. Playing and recording on both sides are excellent, and though recorded by the old method the basses have a very nice fat tone.

There is more melody in one song from some of the older musical comedies than in the whole score of most of the modern ones, and the Life Guards Band have given of their best in *The Merry Widow Selection*. The silky tone of the cornets and clarinets is a delight and the playing of the whole band is very delicate and restrained. This is easily the best record of this music that I have heard.

W. A. C.

MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS

I've caught a big fish in my net (seventy records) this month—no less than **John McCormack** on a ten-inch, six shillings, record (H.M.V., D.A.760); one of those indiscretions which are common-places of the Victor bulletins but seldom survive the Atlantic passage. To be sure, there was Mario Chamlee singing *Me Neenyah* not long ago on Brunswick; so why not McCormack in *Oh, how I miss you to-night* and *You forgot to remember*? The latter is sung by another celebrity, **Al Jolson**, on Brunswick 3013 (3s.), with *Miami* on the other side, both accompanied by Carl Fenton's Orchestra. I still prefer the **Melville Gideon** version to either McCormack or Jolson; and versatile as the latter is in this and in Brunswick 3014 (3s.) I can't help feeling that his popularity, of which I hear much, is a little undeserved. Compare Al Jolson with this month's Melville Gideon, *Why couldn't it be poor little me* and *I wonder where my baby is to-night* (quite differently treated from the Layton and Johnstone method) on H.M.V., B.2287 (3s.) and you will agree.

On the other hand, in spite of the absence of Jack Smith and Art Gillham this month, there is a bunch of quite delightful American humour; the inimitable **Wendall Hall** in *Hokey Pokey* and *Kentucky's Way* (Brunswick 3006, 3s.), the plaintive **Nick Lucas** in *Sleepy time gal* and *I found somebody to love* (Brunswick 2990, 2s.), the famous **Cliff Edwards** in *How can you look so good and the latest tune, Dreaming of a castle in the air* (Actuelle 11037, 2s. 6d.), and the refreshing **Sydney Nesbitt** in *Take 'em to the door Blues*

and *On my ukulele* (Parlo. 5570, 2s. 6d.), and **Frank Crumit**, much better than usual, in *I'm sitting on top of the world* (H.M.V., B.2293, 3s.), with **Gene Austin** in *Sweet Child* on the other side. I recommend all these, but hesitate over the shrill **Buddy Lee** on Vocalion X.9771 (3s.). He rather overdoes it. I prefer **Billy Jones** and **Ernest Hare** in *Flamin' Mamie* and *Nobody's business* (Voc. X.9772, 3s.) to their record (as the Happiness Boys) on H.M.V., B.2283 (3s.). **Billy Williams** is refreshingly raffish in *Save a little one for me* and *John, put your trousers on* (Aco. G.15764, 2s. 6d.); and **Dorrie Dene** does herself more justice than hitherto in *Hundreds and Thousands* and *I may be a lady* (Voc. X.9770, 3s.). Very clear recording in these two records.

Sir Harry Lauder has made two capital new records of old favourites, *Sossie Maclean* and *I've loved her ever since she was a baby* (Zono. G.O.69, 3s.) and *Just a wee deoch-an-doris* and *The wedding of Sandy McNab* (Zono. G.O.68, 3s.); **Betty Chester** has chosen two good dance tunes, but hard to sing effectively, in *Pigtail Alley* and *Deep Elm* (H.M.V., B.2286, 3s.); **Scovell** and **Wheldon** are even better than usual in *Knock at the door* and *Who's got my sweetie* (Parlo. 5571, 2s. 6d.); the **de Reszke Singers** are so-so in *Caroline* and *Mattinata* (H.M.V., E.417, 4s. 6d.) and **Henri Leoni** and **Monty Woolf** are two new (to me) singers on Columbia whom I do not much care for. That *Yvonne* sob-stuff, by the way, which Leoni makes impossible, is really well done—so far as that estaminet-mud-blood-grave business can be—by **Bob Johnson** on two sides of Aco. G.15947 (2s. 6d.). **Ramon Newton** (of the Savoy Orpheans) has the advantage of an excellent accompaniment in *Brown eyes* and *Who's loving my sweetie now* (H.M.V., B.2285); **Billy Desmond** is good as ever on Aco. G.15948 and 15950 (2s. 6d. each), including *Mignnette*, the ingenious dance version of Paderewski's minuet; the protagonists of *Wildflower*, **Kitty Reidy** and **Howett Worster**, make a pleasant record of *The two of us* and *Bachelor Boy* on Voc. X.9769 (3s.); and another record of *The two of us* is sung by **Vivien Lambelet** and **Arthur Cox** on Zono. 2716 (2s. 6d.). Of all the other singers in the Aco., Duophone, Imperial, Parlophone, Regal, and Zonophone lists I have no space to write, and will only commend **Fred Douglas** (Regal), **Robert English** (Parlo.), **Bruce Wallace**, who often sings on Vincent Lopez dance records (Parlo.), and **Frank Gilbert** (Duophone).

Restaurant music is not neglected. There was a twelve-inch *de Groot* of *Less than the dust and Pale hands I love* (H.M.V., C.1257, 4s. 6d.), completing, with B.2237 (3s.) the *Indian Love Lyrics*, and a **Salon Orchestra** record of two tunes by Fiorito (H.M.V., B.2288, 3s.) in the mid-month list; and *de Groot* plays the Schubert *Serenade* with his 'cellist and pianist and *Only for you* with his whole Piccadilly Orchestra on H.M.V., B.2284 (3s.). **Jean Lensen** and his orchestra give Toselli's *Second Serenade* (just done by Moschetto) and the *Chanson Hindou* on Col. 3919 (3s.); and the **J. H. Squire Celeste Octet** are finely recorded in *Parfum de Passé* and *Speak* (Col. 3920, 3s.). All the above are as good as can be, *plats du jour* prepared by most competent chefs. **Moschetto** gives the delightful *Kasbek* (which the Blue Bird Company brought from the Caucasus and which *de Groot* has recorded) and a selection from Breton's *Verbena de la Paloma* on Voc. X.9768 (3s.). I should like to give this top marks, because it is not a *plat du jour*; but it just fails, as usual.

Fradkin, the violinist, has dropped into my basket this month with *Sleepy time gal* and *Sometime* (Brunswick 2087, 3s.) suavely and unaffectedly played. **De Pietro** makes mandoline solos of the *Savoy Scotch* and *Irish Medleys* (Aco. G.15941, 2s. 6d.) with a breathless ingenuity which is only equalled by the two "Piano Exaggerations" which the ever-delightful **Billy Mayerl** has composed and plays on Col. 3926 (3s.). **Donald Lindley** makes a marvellous record of a trumpet solo in *Trumpet Blues* and *Sweet Stuff* (Col. 3939, 3s.). It is a dance record really, and a *tour de force*.

A novelty which will have on that account a great success is a record by **Reginald Foort** on the New Gallery Kinema organ, of *Fleurs d'amour* and *Valencia* (H.M.V., B.2290, 3s.); certainly very effective on my new H.M.V. machine.

Of the musical shows on in London, there are selections from *Kid Boots* on Columbia 9089 (12in., 4s. 6d.) and *Actuelle* 11023 (10in., 2s. 6d.) and Vocalion X.9751 (10in., 3s.). The first two are good, the last rather flabby. I mentioned the H.M.V. version last month. *Actuelle* also has *Wildflower* on 11022 (2s. 6d.) very cheerfully recorded; and a second selection from *Lilac Time* on 15220 (4s.), which unfortunately came to me with an *Actuelle* label on a Pathé disc, so I couldn't try it. I think I was rather ungenerous to the Columbia records of *The Student Prince* last month; taken as a whole they are probably the finest set of records yet issued of a topical musical show. PEPPERING.

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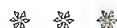
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NEW-POOR RECORDS

DURING April of last year there were many specially fine issues and during the past month history has repeated itself, and for quality and variety all records in the production of reasonably priced discs are broken.

* * *

The gramophone news in the *Daily Telegraph* on the second Saturday of the month is always good reading; a friend sent me the last issue, and I shall always get it in future.

* * *

I see an influential German combine is to issue ten and twelve-inch records in this country at two and three shillings respectively. Where is their headquarters in London, please?

ACO.—I shall put Peggy Cochran's VIOLIN solo first, *Where the Abana flows* (2s. 6d.). The SOPRANO record by Thea Phillips, *Solveig's Song* (2s. 6d.) is good workmanship. John Thorne, BARITONE, is charming as ever in *The Yellow Boreen* (2s. 6d.). The best selection from *Wildflower* is that by the Georgia Orchestra (2s. 6d.). POPULAR SONG: *Honey I'm in love with you*, sung by Billy Desmond (2s. 6d.).

ACTUELLE.—*Picador* (2s. 6d.) is going to oust *Valencia* from popularity. It is a pleasure to welcome these pungent recordings again in such a fine number. There is also some American music, to which these recordings are so well suited, in *Kid Boots* selection (2s. 6d.).

BELTONA.—It is sixpence above our ordinary prices, but in the record, *Lo! Here the gentle lark* with *Il Bacio* on the reverse, May Huxley has made the most satisfying four-and-sixpenny twelve-inch SOPRANO record for the average taste yet in my collection. The voice is altogether charming, the workmanship superb, and the slight recording-room nervousness (it will wear off) that results in a few delayed leads only serves to put us more in sympathy with the singer. ORCHESTRAL: A capital record of *Fingal's Cave* (2s. 6d.). Manuel Hemingway, BASS, is exceedingly good in *Mélanide in the Wood* (2s. 6d.). MILITARY BAND: *William Tell*, two discs at 4s. each. There are two SCOTS NUMBERS, a bagpipe solo, *Sleep, dearest, sleep* (2s. 6d.), and a vocal pair, *McAllister* (2s. 6d.). JAZZ: The best record I yet have of *Valencia* (2s. 6d.).

HOMOCHORD.—Chevalier H. Solloway is winning the highest possible encomiums all over Italy for his VIOLIN playing; his record this month, a magnificent twelve-inch disc that would be cheap at any price, is Wieniawsky's *Scherzo Tarantelle* (4s.). A series of exceptionally fine TANGO records is to be issued; they are in every way the real thing, and the first to be issued is *Tango Sentimentale* (2s. 6d.).

IMPERIAL.—Many congratulations indeed on the two fine doubles for TENOR, sung in Italian by Luigi Cilla, *Addio Mignon* (2s.) and *Questa o quella* (2s.). They are first class things of their kind, and everyone ought to support the Crystalate Company in issuing music of this quality at such a low price. There is also a good JAZZ recording of my favourite *Picador* (2s.).

PARLOPHONE.—Vincent Lopez has just opened his own club in New York, and one in London is to follow immediately; I hope they will cause the demand for his music that these incomparable performances deserve. This month we have *I never knew* (2s. 6d.). There are three particularly fine twelve-inch discs at sixpence each above our usual prices. ORCHESTRAL: *Suite Orientale*, Edith Lorand Orchestra. VIOLIN: *Slavonic Dances* (Dvorák), played by Tossy Spiwakowsky. VOCAL DUET from the *Meistersinger*, Emmy Bettendorf and Alfred Jerger.

REGAL.—An exceedingly charming and delicate rendering on the PIANOFORTE of Mendelssohn's *Spring Song* and *Bees' wedding* on one disc (2s. 6d.). The lightness of the recording suits the music, which, owing to the perfection of the surface, is not spoilt by surface noise; but at the same time I shall welcome future productions of the kind more wholeheartedly if they have as much tone as the magnificent *Electric Girl* (Regal) now so well known.

VELVET FACE AND WINNER.—The sincerest thanks and most complete support are due from all lovers of Wagner's music for the magnificent records made entirely regardless of expense and issued during the past month at strictly new-poor prices by Mr. T. Hough (Edison Bell, Ltd., 1, Newton Street, Holborn). There are two four-shillings discs by full ORCHESTRA and SOPRANO VOICE of the closing scene of the *Twilight of the Gods*. The soloist is Tatiana Makushina. Showing the composer in an altogether

different mood there is on two four-shilling discs the *Siegfried Idyll*, and this is the best record of this ORCHESTRAL work I have. An exquisite classical half-crown Winner is the WIND QUINTETTE, *Finale to Suite, Op. 57* (Lefebvre). UNCOMMON RECORD.—*Deep in my heart* (waltz), played on a small theatrical tremolo organ and piano, a weird combination.

ZONOPHONE.—A grand SACRED record is made by Bessie Jones (soprano), *With Verdure Clad* (4s.); a good PIANOFORTE pair by Max Darewski, *Chanson Triste* (2s. 6d.).

ULTIMATE SELECTIONS.—ORCHESTRAL (12in.): *Suite Orientale* (PARLO.) and *Siegfried Idyll* (V.F.). 10in.: *Fingal's Cave* (BELTONA). ORCHESTRA AND SOPRANO: *Twilight of the Gods* (V.F.). SOPRANO: *Il Bacio* (BELTONA). TENOR: *Questa o quella* (IMPERIAL). BARITONE: *The Yellow Boreen* (ACO.). BASS: *Mélanide in the Wood* (BELTONA). PIANO: *Spring Song* (REGAL). SACRED: *With Verdure Clad* (ZONO.). WOOD-WIND: *Finale* (WINNER). VOCAL DUET: *Meistersinger* (PARLO.). VIOLIN AND PIANO (12in.), *Scherzo Tarantelle* (HOMO.); 10in., *Where the Abana flows* (ACO.). TANGO: *Tango Sentimentale* (HOMO.). SCOTS NUMBER: *McAllister* (BELTONA). JAZZ: *I never knew* (PARLO.); *Picador* (ACTUELLE).

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The Grand Organ.—For years I have had to say "There is only one real and satisfactory grand organ record, Bach's *Fugue*, COLUMBIA," but now I can add another to it, and I do so fearlessly, notwithstanding that the price is 4s. 6d. for a ten-inch disc, *Fugue à la Gigue* (H.M.V.). There is sufficient tone all over both sides to hide surface noise, tone is true in character, pedal notes are well shown, the compositions are real organ works (one by Bach, one by Widor), the playing is clean, the recording is full.

H. T. B.

DANCE NOTES

By Albert Dock

THIS month there are only four tango records; is it that the Spanish flavour of the Paso Doble is to replace this lovely rhythm of which Englishmen fight so shy? *Picador* is running *Valencia* close for the one-step prize, and is a jolly tune; but, oh, the waltzes! What mortal ennui inspires them! They would drive my romantic soul away to Vienna if it weren't for the fox-trots, of which this month we have a very special selection—Paul Whiteman, Savoy Orpheans, and other excellent cheaper records.

What a jolly big band Paul Whiteman has! It gives him material for inexhaustible variety, but compared to the somehow mischievously stimulating quality of the Savoy Orpheans his records have an almost sombre flavour; so that, although they are fascinatingly interesting to listen to, some people may find the light orchestra gayer for dancing.

FOX-TROTS.

H.M.V. B.5038.—*Hymn to the Sun***. Those who associate this air with the opera by Rimsky-Korsakov from which it is adapted, may find that Paul Whiteman's large orchestra and the low key in which he keeps it, rather overweight the music; it seems to me, however, to be the best of this month's dance records. The *Lo Nah** on the reverse is also good.

VOC. X.9778.—*Hokey Pokey* (V.)* and *There ain't no flies on Auntie* (V.)* (The Tuxedo Orchestra). Jolly tunes with excellent quick rhythm and well sung. Complete contrast to Whiteman or Orpheans, but good.

H.M.V. B.5039.—*Sweet child, I'm wild about you** and *I never knew how wonderful you were** (Paul Whiteman). These are slow and quiet; not wonderful tunes, but so well played that one can't resist them.

H.M.V. B.5028.—*I never knew**. This charming tune deserves to remain in vogue; one doesn't get tired of it especially when played by the Savoy Orpheans. On the reverse, *Susie was a real wild child* (V.)*.

H.M.V. B.5029.—*Oh lady be good*** and *Hang on to me*** (Savoy Orpheans). Beautifully intelligent orchestration and variations, and good tunes into the bargain.

PARLO. 5561.—*Oh lady be good** (by the Red Hotlers) and *Fascinating Rhythm*** (by the Yellow Jackets). Not very fast, well played, and perhaps the best of the cheap records.

- H.M.V. B.5017.—*Headin' for Louisville*** and *No man's mamma* (Savoy Orpheans). Cheerful and excellently played; this orchestra always makes one dance.
- PARLO. 5564.—*The two of us** and *The Tin Can Fusiliers** (Ronnie Munro and his Dance Orchestra). Loud; good for a cheap record.
- IMP. 1571.—*Ukulele Baby* (V.)* and *Too-too* (V.)* (Greening's Dance Orchestra). Quite good.
- COL. 3932.—*Mysterious Eyes*** (the Denza Dance Orchestra) and *That certain party* (V.)* (Ted Lewis and his Band). Excellent rhythm.
- H.M.V. 5033.—*Medley of Leslie Stuart's Songs* (V.)* (Jack Hylton and Orchestra). Two sides. Has variety and so is jolly to dance to.
- H.M.V. B.5036.—*Mysterious Eyes**, and *I've got those wanner go home again blues* (V.)*. (Savoy Orpheans).
- COL. 3934.—*Spanish Shawl**, good piano variations, and *At dawnin'* (Denza Dance Band). A good record.
- COL. 3931.—*I'm going out if Lizzie comes in* (V.)* and *If you care** (Paul Specht's Canadian Club Orchestra). Good rhythm.
- COL. 3933.—*Who loved you best** and *I never knew** (Denza Dance Band). Good rhythm.
- REGAL. G.8578.—*I love my baby** and *Loud-speaking Papa* (Raymond Dance Band). Rather ugly, but good time.
- H.M.V. B.5031.—*Just drifting* (V.)* (Savoy Havanas) and see "Waltzes."
- REGAL. G.8576.—*Headin' for Louisville** (Raymond Dance Band) and see "Waltzes." Good time.
- COL. 3929.—*Love bound** and *I love my baby* (V.)* (New Princes Toronto Band.)
- COL. 3930.—*Clap hands, here comes Charlie* (V.)* and *Pretending* (Paul Specht and the Canadian Club Orchestra). Good quick rhythm.
- COL. 3941.—*Hang on to me* (V.) and *Oh lady be good* (V.)* (Percival Mackey's Band). Quite good.
- H.M.V. B.5030.—*So am I** (Savoy Orpheans). A jolly tune from the new musical comedy, *Lady be good*, with good piano variations, owing to which, however, the record is sometimes a little too quiet. On the back, *Fascinating rhythm** (Savoy Orpheans).
- H.M.V. B.5035.—*Get going* and *Take your pick** (Savoy Havana Band). Excellent time and a beautifully played banjo.
- H.M.V. B.5025.—*Beside a silv'ry stream**—has more the qualities of a waltz than of a fox trot—and *Good-night* (V.)* (Herbert Gerger's Coronado Hotel Orchestra). Played with much conviction in a somewhat solid way. A good contrast to the witty touch of the Savoy Orpheans.
- H.M.V. B.5023.—*Student Prince's Serenade** and *I love to be in Laughterland* (V.)* (Jack Hylton). Good.
- H.M.V. B.5041.—*Fleurs d'Amour** and *Nothing else to do* (V.) (Jack Hylton). Well played.
- BRUN. B.2992.—*A little bit bad* (V.)* and *Sleepy time gal* (V.)* (Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra). Well sung, but rather unexciting rhythm.
- BRUN. B.2991.—*Lonesomest girl in town* (V.)* and *Heading for Louisville* (V.)* (Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra). Good rhythm. Quick.
- H.M.V. B.5024.—*I'm knee-deep in daisies* (V.)* and *Miami**. (Savoy Havana). Excellent rhythm.
- ACO. G.15954.—*Oh lady be good** and *Oh that sweetie of mine* (V.)* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra). Good. Well played and well sung with charming variations.
- VOC. X.9775.—*To-morrow mornin'* (V.)* and *Oh lady be good* (Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra).
- VOC. X.9776.—*Keep on crooning a tune** and *Someone's stolen my sweet baby* (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra).
- BEL. 956.—*Love Bound* (V.)* (Southern States Dance Band) and see "Fox-trots."
- VOC. X.9777.—*Whoopie* (V.)* (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- REGAL. G.8558.—*Bamboola* (V.)* and *Whoopie* (V.) (Raymond Dance Orchestra). A good record for the price.
- REGAL. G.8560.—*Sleepy time gal** and *Dinah* (Corona Dance Orchestra).
- DUO. B.5136.—*Roll 'em girls* (V.)* and *I ain't got nobody* (Monterey Dance Band). Ugly variations. Quick.
- REGAL. G.8565.—*What's the good of leaving the old home** and *The two of us* (Raymond Dance Band). Quite a good cheap record.
- PARLO. 5562.—*I never knew**—good rhythm, but with a rather too sudden end—and *Don't wake me up* (Lopez and his Casa Lopez Orchestra). Good.
- BRUNS. B.3022.—*I wonder where my baby is to-night** and *I'm sitting on top of the world* (Isham Jones Orchestra). Well played and good rhythm.
- PARLO. 5565.—*Paradise** (Ronnie Munro and his Dance Orchestra). *Every step towards Killarney* (V.). Not very well sung, but well played by the Marlborough Dance Orchestra. A good record. The latter is a waltz.
- DUO. B.5127.—*Kashmiri**. The *Indian Love Lyrics* at last find their true sphere; like the English *Rose* and *Thrush* ballad, they make delightfully sentimental dances. On the reverse is *Naila*. Both played by John Birmingham.
- DUO. B.5132.—*Woopie* (V.)* To say it is vocal is to put things mildly, for it is enlivened by such sounds as a base-ball crowd loves. Cheerfully savage music with excellent rhythm. On the reverse is *Dream Pal*, which is comparatively tame. (Savile Dance Band).
- DUO. B.5135.—*Manda** (cheerful quick rhythm) and *Promenade Walk*, with variations on a somewhat obscene instrument of the bassoon species. Both played by the Leas Dance Orchestra.
- BRUNS. B.3015.—*My castle in Spain** and *I love my baby* (Isham Jones Orchestra).
- IMP. 1572.—*My castle in Spain* (V.)* (Greening's Dance Orchestra) and see "Waltzes." It's nice to get the vocal part as well sung as this one is!
- BRUNS. B.2999.—*Five foot two eyes of blue* and *Just around the corner* (Ernie Golden and his Hotel McAlpin Orchestra). Quite good.
- H.M.V. B.5040.—*Thanks for the Buggy ride* (V.) and *When you see that aunt of mine* (V.) (Jack Hylton). Good rhythm, but poor tunes, though well played.
- BRUNS. B.2993.—*I want somebody to cheer me up* and *Drifting apart* (Isham Jones Orchestra).
- IMP. 1569.—*In the gloaming of Wyoming* (V.) (Greening's Dance Orchestra) and see "One-steps."
- IMP. 1570.—*Tin Can Fusiliers* (V.) (Greening's Dance Orchestra) and see "One-steps."
- H.M.V. B.5027.—*Masculine men and feminine women* (V.) (Savoy Havana Band) and see "One-steps."
- DUO. B.5100.—*Fooling and That certain party* (V.) (Leas Dance Orchestra), which sometimes shows that simple, rather low, humour which is represented in an orchestra by the bassoon. A good record.
- H.M.V. B.5034.—*I'm still in love with you* and *Who loved you best?* (Kit Cat Band).
- REGAL. G.8557.—*Clap hands, here comes Charlie* (V.) and *A cup of coffee, a sandwich, and you* (Raymond Dance Band).
- PARLO. 5563.—*What did I tell ya* and *Smile a little bit* (the Red Hotters). Good rhythm. Loud.
- BRUN. B.3023.—*Poor little rich girl* and *A cup of coffee, a sandwich, and you* (V.) (Orchestra chez Fysher). The latter is well sung, with reminiscences from *Gigolette*. It is fast and loud.
- IMP. 1574.—*Smile a little bit and I love my baby* (V.) (Sam Lanin's Dance Orchestra). Good record.
- H.M.V. B.5019.—*Surabaya maid* and *Ukulele baby* (Jack Hylton and his Band). Adequate.
- H.M.V. B.5020.—*Piccadilly Street* and *Don't wake me up* (Kit-Cat Band). Not very pleasant variations nor is the rhythm exciting.
- PARLO. E.10438 (12in.).—*Taxi for two* (Marek Weber and his Orchestra) and see "Waltzes." Rather a graceful tune, but not very thrilling to dance to.
- DUO. B.5128.—*Smile all the while* (John Birmingham and his Band) and see "Waltzes." Not bad.
- DUO. B.5130.—*Brown eyes why are you blue* (John Birmingham and his Band) and see "Waltzes." Dull and slow.
- DUO. 5137.—*Mother me, Tennessee* and see "Waltzes."
- REGAL. G.8651.—*Then I'll be happy* (Corona Dance Orchestra) and see "Waltzes." Fast and jolly.

- DUO. B.5129.—*Spanish shawl* (John Birmingham) and see "One-steps."
- ACTUELLE 11030.—*What did I tell you* (Lew Gold and his Orchestra) and *Smile all the while* (V.) (Selvin's Dance Orchestra).
- ACTUELLE 11025.—*Oh you, California* (Star Syncopators) and see "One-steps."
- REGAL G.8559.—*Why do short men like tall girls* (V.) (Raymond Dance Orchestra) and see "One-steps." Not a bad record.
- VOC. X.9774.—*Somehow* (V.) and *Fascinating rhythm* (V.) (Don Parker and his Band). Not very good.
- BEL. 965.—*In Ukulele Avenue* (Avenue Dance Orchestra) and see "One-steps." A poor tune.
- ACO. G.15953.—*Too too* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "One-steps."
- ACO. G.15955.—*Sweet Child* (V.) (Rio Grande Dance Orchestra) and see "Waltzes." Ugly instrumental effects, which may, however, amuse many people.
- VOC. X.9773.—*You ought to know* (Don Parker and his Band) and see "Waltzes." Not specially good.
- REGAL G.8579.—*Don't wake me up and I want somebody to cheer me up* (Corona Dance Orchestra). Good.
- COL. 3928.—*Say it when you get the chance and Lullaby baby* (New Princes Toronto Band). Not wonderful.
- COL. 3940.—*Fascinating rhythm* and *So am I* (Percival Mackey's Band). Not bad.
- COL. 3927.—*Just drifting* (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band) and see "Waltzes." Slight blast.
- REGAL G.8567.—*Serenade from Student Prince* (Raymond's Dance Orchestra) and see "Waltzes." Dull.

WALTZES.

- H.M.V. B.5021.—*Song Bird** and *Hawaiian Love Bird* (Kit-Cat Band). Really very good whistling.
- H.M.V. B.5022.—*Speak** and *Ninette Ninon* (Savoy Orpheans). Good, though rather banal lilt, and well played.
- COL. 3927.—*An old-time song** (Bert Ralton and his Havana Band) and see "Fox Trots." Loud, but well played in slow time. The record suffers slightly from blast.
- IMP. 1572.—*Every step towards Killarney* (V.)* (Greening's Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Slow and rather somnolent, but very well sung.
- VOC. X.9777.—*Just one more waltz with you** (Mayfair Trio) and see "Fox-trots." Nice and slow.
- REGAL G.8576.—*Speak** (Raymond Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Good time and well played.
- ACO. G.15955.—*The kiss I can't forget* (V.)* (Rio Grande Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."
- VOC. X.9773.—*Always* (V.)* (Don Parker and his Band) and see "Fox-trots." Very quiet and quite nice.
- DUO. B.5137.—*Without you** (Burlington Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Best of the cheaper waltzes. Slow, but good rhythm.
- DUO. B.5134.—*The loneliest girl in town*, not very interesting, and *When I dream of the last waltz with you* (V.) (Burlington Dance Orchestra). Rather a pleasant tune, slow and well-played.
- REGAL G.8561.—*When I dream of the last waltz with you* (V.) (Corona Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Rather slow, but better on the whole than the Duo version; it is better sung.
- IMP. 1573.—*Down by the Winegar Woiks* (V.) (Nathan Glantz and his Orchestra) and *Always I'll be loving you* (V.). Lacking in entrain. They are quiet and restful.
- PARLO. E.10438 (12in.).—*Couleur de Rose* (Marek Weber and Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Not very good.
- BRUNS. B.2817.—*Deep in my heart, dear and Dreams* (Carl Fenton's Orchestra). Both lacking in inspiration.
- BRUNS. B.2986.—*Carolina Sweetheart* and *Honeymoon Waltz* (V.), which is too slow (Cattwood Mariamba Band)
- DUO. B.5128.—*Some time* (John Birmingham) and see "Fox-trots." Very slow and heavy.
- DUO. B.5130.—*Carolina sweetheart* (John Birmingham) and see "Fox-trots." Not really very good. Quiet and slow.

- COL. 3921.—*Sweet Hawaiian dream* (V.) and *Sunny smiles of Hawaii* (V.) (the Xylo-Rimba Orchestra). Quiet ukulele record.
- REGAL G.8575.—*Mignonette* (Raymond Dance Band) and see "One-steps." Dull and heavy.
- COL. 3938.—*The prisoner's song* (Paul Specht's Canadian Club Orchestra) and see "One-steps." Heavy and dull.
- H.M.V. B.5031.—*I wonder* (Savoy Orpheans) and see "Fox-trots." Pleasantly orchestrated, but not inspired.
- REGAL G.8567.—*Deep in my heart, dear* (Raymond Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Laborious.
- ZONO. 2722. *You forgot to remember* and *Always* (Bert Firmin's Dance Orchestra). Dull, and suffers from slight blast.

ONE-STEPS.

- IMP. 1570. *Picador* (V.)* (Greening's Dance Orchestra). And see "Fox-trots." Very well played and excellent for a cheap record.
- H.M.V. B.5026.—*Vito** and *Sevilla*** (Paso Doble) (Rio Grande Tango Band). A great improvement on usual one-step music and well played.
- H.M.V. B.5027.—*Picador* (V.)* (Savoy Havana Band), and see "Fox-trots." This is, I think, the best of all the versions of the excellent tune, it is so finely orchestrated.
- ACTUELLE 11625.—*Picador** (Raymond Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Always a good tune, but these variations are ugly.
- IMP. 1569.—*Valencia* (V.)* (Greening's Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Best of the cheap records of this popular tune.
- DUO. B.5129.—*Valencia** (John Birmingham) and see "Fox-trots."
- REGAL G.8559.—*Valencia* (Raymond Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Always a good tune, but ugly variations.
- BEL. 956.—*Valencia** (Sunny South Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."
- BEL. 965.—*Picador* (V.)* (Avenue Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."
- ACO. 15953.—*Picador* (V.)* (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Not remarkable.
- REGAL G.8575.—*Picador* (V.) (Raymond Dance Orchestra) and see "Waltzes." Good rhythm.
- COL. 3938.—*Picador* (Bert Ralton and his Havanna Band) and see "Waltzes." Dull.
- PATHE 1913.—*Picador* and *The Tin Can Fusiliers* (The Star Syncopators). Too quiet for dancing, and a poor record in every way.

TANGOS.

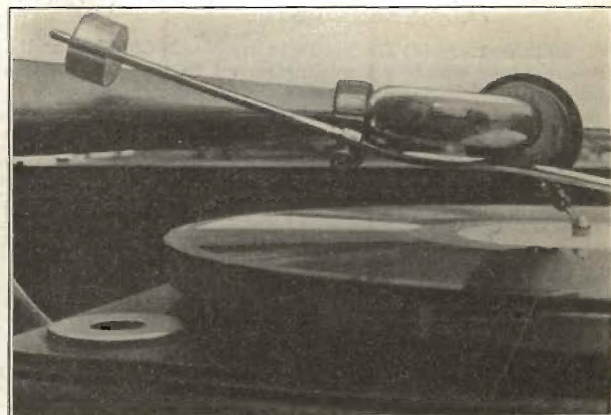
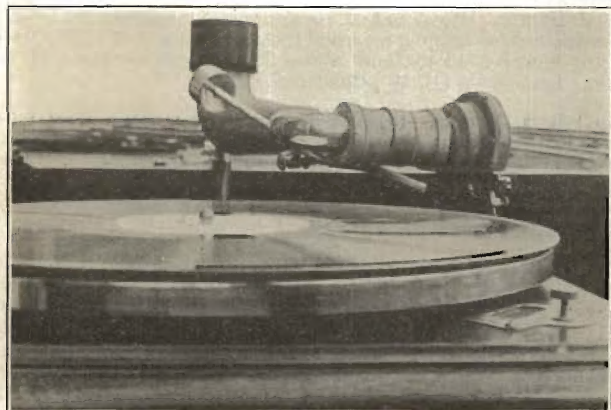
- H.M.V. B.5009.—*Deception** and *Los Gauchos** (Savoy Tango Orchestra). A good record.
- H.M.V. B.5008.—*Valentino* and *El Misionero** (Savoy Tango Orchestra). Good.
- ACO. G.15913.—*Jalousie** (Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra) and *Rosita** (Harry Bidgood and his Tango Orchestra). Both quite good tangos, but not exceptionally attractive.
- H.M.V. B.5032.—*El Dormilón* and *Milonguita* (Rio Grande Tango Band). Not remarkably good.

N.B.—In the above lists the titles of all the best records are printed in heavy (Carendon) type, and all are, as far as possible, in order of merit; the use of asterisks is a further effort to denote comparative value.

When one band only is mentioned in describing a record it means that both tunes are played by the same band. (V.) after the name of a tune indicates the presence of a vocal refrain. All records are ten-inch unless otherwise described. The abbreviations of the makers' names are obvious.

The prices of the records in these lists are as follows:—Aco, 10in., 2s. 6d. Actuelle, 10in., 2s. 6d. Beltona, 10in., 2s. 6d. Brunswick, 10in., 3s. Columbia, 10in., 3s. Duophone, 10in., 2s. 6d. H.M.V., 10in., 3s. Imperial, 10in., 2s. Parlophone, 12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 2s. 6d. Vocalion, 10in., 3s. Zonophone, 10in., 2s. 6d.

TWO NECESSARY GADGETS



These two photographs show a Lifebelt and a Weight Adjuster in position on an H.M.V. tone-arm.

Directions for fitting and use are sent out with every Lifebelt and every Weight Adjuster.

THE LIFEBELT, introduced to the readers of THE GRAMOPHONE by the Editor last November, has proved its success on a large variety of makes of gramophones. In many cases the effect has seemed miraculous. Price 5s., post free.

For gramophones with a Continental fitting (that is, where a tube projecting from the back of the sound-box fits directly into a socket at the end of the tone-arm), the Lifebelt can be fixed without using any adaptor. For gramophones with H.M.V. fitting (that is, where the end of the tone-arm fits into a recess or rubber back at the rear of the sound-box), an adaptor will be supplied with the Lifebelt. For Columbia machines a special form of adaptor can be supplied.

The Lifebelt cannot be fitted to Edison machines, Cliftophones, or other gramophones in which the sound-box is screwed to a flange at the end of the tone-arm.

THE WEIGHT ADJUSTER is made in two models: (a) for old H.M.V. goose-neck tone-arms; (b) for new H.M.V. tone-arms. Price 7s. 6d., postage 3d.

It is not just a counter-weight, but an *adjustable* counter-weight, which can be shifted so as to remove the weight of your tone-arm and Lifebelt, and to leave only the weight of your sound-box on the record. Unlike a spring, its effect is constant in every position, so that there is no tendency for the needle to be lifted out of the groove.

The lightening of the weight on the record does not necessarily improve the tone. Its vital importance is that it *saves the wear on the record*. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that it trebles the life of each record.

This weight adjuster cannot be fitted to any gramophones except those which have H.M.V. or similarly shaped tone-arms.

Views on the Lifebelt

"I have put the Lifebelt under test and find that the added flexibility makes for an appreciable difference in the quality of tone, considerably reducing needle-scratch and permitting the use of the loudest needles without the least harshness. The five shillings charged for this device is very well worth while, as the general improvement on all machines and affecting all records is out of all proportion to the cheapness and simplicity of the gadget, which bids fair to become very popular with the public."—Extract from *The Talking Machine World*, Feb. 15th.

"To-day, before I talk about new records, I want to refer to a new invention which is making a great stir in England and which effects a great improvement in the reproduction on the gramophone . . . The effect is stupendous. The flexible sound-box moves much more

lightly and smoothly along the groove than before. For that reason not only is the surface noise reduced, but the tone-colour gains in an extraordinary way, both in realism and intensity. One can observe this best in the reproduction of string quartets; the violins, viola, and 'cello are brought into relief, distinct from each other, more than ever before. The improvement is also very marked with wind instruments. German manufacturers are strongly urged to make experiments in relation to the flexible connexion between tone-arm and sound-box. Experiment should soon determine definitely how much flexibility may be used. In any case the new principle is of great importance. It improves the tone much more than many an ingenious amplifier and more than many, many experiments which are everlastingly being made with the most diverse materials of construction . . ."—DR. RUDOLPH LOTHAR in the "*Musik-Instrumenten-Zeitung*," translated from the German.

NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment or question should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W. 1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given for reference.]

(392) **Soundboxes.**—(a) The needle in my No. 2 H.M.V. soundbox vibrates audibly, which is very unpleasant to the ear. Is there anything to remedy this? Cutting the needle shorter does not take away this vibration and I am positive that this noise is not caused by any other part of my gramophone. I have correct needle-track alignment.

[Perhaps the walls of the needle-hole are rough and want smoothing, or maybe the screw-thread on the tightening screw or in the needle-socket is too much worn. The best remedy in the latter case is a new stylus bar, but an alternative is to have a slightly larger screw fitted.]

(b) What is the correct method to regulate a H.M.V. No. 2 soundbox? What rules (if any) are to be taken in consideration?—J. J. v. R., Nooder Paarl, S. Africa.

[It is difficult to give any rules here, owing to the peculiar gasket in which the mica is held, but see that the tension springs are so adjusted that the mica is not pushed inwards at the centre, but is either pulled forward a trifle or lies perfectly flat.]

(393) **Pachmann.**—Can you persuade H.M.V. to get Pachmann to do all the studies or preludes of Chopin? They would make up a nice album.—G. S., Biarritz.

(394) **Best Records.**—Irrespective of price, what are the best versions of (a) "Parsifal," "Prelude"; (b) "Parsifal," "Good Friday Music"; (c) "Siegfried Idyll"; (d) "Die Meistersinger," "Overture"; (e) "Surprise Symphony"; (f) "Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine."—M. G. A. H., Crosby, Liverpool.

(395) **Ghost Voices.**—At the beginning of Gervase Elwes' record of "Sigh no more" (H.M.V.) the man in charge of the operations distinctly says, "Are you ready?"—M. G. A. H., Crosby, Liverpool.

(396) **Odeon Records.**—The hints given by various correspondents as to Polydor records have been valuable. Perhaps some readers who have wide experience of Odeon records would give us the benefit of their knowledge. The two Odeon catalogues include a great number of important things by high class artists. I have found the following records very good: Schumann's "Dichterliebe," sung by Richard Tauber (80103); "Air from Seraglio" (double-sided), sung by Ivogün (9005); this is much fuller than Polydor 85303 and equally well done. Surface rather noisy.—C. M., Edinburgh.

(397) **Polydors in America.**—Importers of these records in the United States are B. M. Mai, 414, North State Street, Chicago, Illinois, and A. Bremser, 716, Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, California. This information may be of interest to other American readers of THE GRAMOPHONE.—F. H. P., Washington.

(398) **Price of Records.**—The way people grumble over the price of records at home! They do not know when they are well off. \$28 (14s.) is charged here for an ordinary red label Victor record which you pay 8s. 6d. for in England.—T. G. F., Straits of Magellan.

(399) **Drdla.**—I have two violin solos, viz., "Serenade à Kubelik" and "Souvenir," composed by Franz Drdla. I cannot find any reference of this composer in any musical books. I should be greatly obliged if any reader could give me any details concerning him.—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(400) **The Twenty Best Records.**—In response to "Recordus" (York) and others who have not got the November, 1924, number in which the result of the "Gramophone Nights" competition was published, we give here the numbers of the winning records: Columbia L.1494, L.1495, L.1559-L.1561, L.1557, L.1558, L.1563-L.1565, L.1531 and 7366; H.M.V. D.A.557, D.782, D.783, D.697, D.698; Parlophone E.10080; Vocalion D.02107.

(401) **Concertos.**—When are the manufacturers going to give us correct opus numbers? (a) "Beethoven Concerto No. 1 in C major," by Kempff, on Polydor. Is this the correct number of the concerto? What is the opus number? (b) "Beethoven Concerto in C minor," by Murdoch, Col. L.1686-9. Is this the

Third Concerto? Your reviewer says it is, but Columbia list says nothing.—S. O. H., Galaha, Ceylon.—[(b) Yes.]

(402) **Records Wanted.**—Please let me know if I can obtain a cheaper record of "Carmena" (vocal waltz) (Wilson) than the H.M.V. Also, is there any other military band version of Dvorák's "Humoresque" besides the Columbia one?—T. W., N.W. 8.

(403) **Hymns.**—May I suggest for the religious side of your readers a competition for hymns, recorded by the new process? We want some of Sankey, Moody, and Alexander, as well as some of the popular hymns.—S. E. W., Chadsmoor, Staffs.

(404) **Best Records.**—(a) Which record of Destinn does most justice to the dramatic side of her voice? (b) What are the best renderings of the following: "Suicidio" ("Gioconda"), "Vissi d'arte" ("Tosca"), "Bell Song" ("Lakmé"), "Solveig's Song" ("Peer Gynt"), "O Lola bianca" and Intermezzo ("Cavalleria Rusticana"), "Spring Song" (Mendelssohn)?—W. H., Ware.

[(a) H.M.V., D.B.222 or D.B.223. (b) "Suicidio," Ponselle, H.M.V., D.B.854; those by Boninsegna, Destinn and Jeritza are also very good. "Vissi d'arte," Farrar, H.M.V., D.B.246; other good ones are by Boninsegna, Cavalieri, Destinn, Destournel, Edvina, and Jeritza; "Bell Song," Garrison, Victor 6135; this excellent disc is more complete than several other good recordings of the air. "Solveig's Song," Galli-Curci, H.M.V., D.B.263, Labbette, Col. L.1458, and Rethberg, Bruns. 15069, are all very good; the last-named has only one verse. "O Lola bianca," Caruso, H.M.V., D.A.117.—"Piccolo."]

(405) **Gramophone Adjustment.**—(See 391.) I tried the effect of two Sorbo rubber balls on my machine (table grand). The surface noise and motor grind certainly almost disappeared, but the volume of tone was reduced to less than half, probably on account of the rubber balls absorbing the vibrations. I wonder if any of your readers could tell me how "Sphinxes" in Schumann's Carnival Music is played?—A. E. R., Camberwell.

(406) **Faulty Records.**—Nearly all my records develop "crackles" (crepitation) after a very few playings over. The old discs are not affected in this way; it is in the present-day discs that this occurs. What is the reason? and do any other readers experience the same trouble? My records are stored with greatest care in cardboard boxes lined with damp-proof paper in a cool, dry room. Someone has suggested to me that minute air bubbles, which break under the pressure of the needle, may be the cause.—A. R., Littlehampton.

[You do not give us sufficient data. If, however, you are convinced that the trouble lies in the records, take the matter up with your dealer, and if you cannot get satisfaction in this way, approach the makers of the records in question.—ED.]

(407) **Ballinderry.**—There is a haunting Irish air known as "Ballinderry." It is not in any of the gramophone catalogues known to me. Could Sir Hamilton Harty be induced to treat it as he did the Londonderry Air which, as played by the Symphony Orchestra, is a gem?—P. S. C., Sydney, Australia.

(408) **Melodies.**—Please send me a list of records having beautiful melodies, such as Toselli's Serenade, Meditation from "Thais," "Ballet Egyptien," "Una voce," "Echo Song," "Prize Song," Haydn's "Quartet in E flat." All these I possess, but I want others as good or even better. What can you recommend of orchestral movements from symphonies, or complete—vocal, piano, string quartet—gems from opera by Light Opera Company, etc.?—H. V. H., Birkenhead.

[Such modest requests as these are best left for other readers to satisfy.—ED.]

(409) **The Mastersingers.**—Could you tell me if I could obtain anywhere the list of cuts made in the H.M.V. records of "The Mastersingers," issued in December, 1923? I have Schott's edition of the score.—H. R., Taunton.

(410) **Best Records wanted** of "Tom Bowling," "Home, Sweet Home," "Old folks at home," "Sally in our Alley," "Robin Adair," and "I passed by your window."—R. C., Belfast.

(411) **Making one's own records.**—(1) Does any firm supply blank records for making one's own records. (2) Is there any handbook on recording (for making one's own records)?—J. B., Eynemont, Cumberland.

[So far as discs are concerned, no.—ED.]